

The Icelandic Canadian

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The Icelandic Canadian

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THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to New Personnel

It is always a pleasure to welcome new members to the committee responsible for the publication of this magazine but on this occasion it is an unusual pleasure. Four people were asked to join the staff and they all accepted. That in itself is most gratifying and encouraging to the old members who remained on the committee. They would probably not have accepted if they had not felt that the public have confidence in the magazine and appreciate the measure of success that has been achieved in the past.

The selection of the four was not made at random. They were carefully selected with the object in view of strengthening the editorial board so that the magazine could the more effectively carry out the purposes for which it exists. In this respect the nominating committee was highly successful. Laudatory statements, though merited, will not be made and mere introductory notes inserted, and it will be left to the readers to judge the newcomers as well as others by the quality of their work.

Mrs. E. P. Jónsson, nee Ingibjörg Sigurgeirsson, was born and raised on Hecla Island in Lake Winnipeg. She was a school teacher and taught school for some years both in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. During the last twelve years she has been Editor of the Women's section of Lögberg, the Icelandic weekly of which her husband has been editor for many years as disclosed elsewhere in this issue. Mrs. Jónsson has been Secretary of The Icelandic Na-

tional League for some years and as such has come in contact with many Icelanders, both in Iceland and in America.

Thorsteinn O. S. Thorsteinson, who was born in Portage la Prairie and raised there and in the Langruth district, has had fifteen years experience in newspaper work. For ten years he was with The Northern Mail, a daily published at The Pas, four years with a weekly at Flin Flon and during the last two years has been with the Winnipeg Free Press and at present is Assistant Provincial Editor. He enlisted in 1941 and during and after the war has had about ten years experience in public relations work. Mr. Thorsteinson taught school for five years before he joined the staff of The Northern Mail.

Mrs. Thorsteinson, nee Beatrice McLeod, is a teacher by profession as well as a housewife.

Wilhelm Kristjanson needs no introduction to readers of The Icelandic Canadian. He has written articles for the magazine in the past and as President of The Icelandic Canadian Club for three years and active member for many years, he has always been in close touch with the magazine. Sometime ago Mr. Kristjanson completed a 550 page history of the Icelanders in Manitoba. This was done at the request of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba who, for publication purposes, decided to have the history reduced to 300 pages. When that has

been done the book will be placed in the hands of publishers. Mrs. Kristjansson, daughter of Helgi and the late Asta Johnson of Winnipeg, was formerly a music teacher.

G. B. Arelius Isfeld, was born and raised near Husavik on Lake Winnipeg, the son of Ágúst and Ólina Isfeld, both deceased. He is a teacher by profession and at present is teaching in the King Edward School in Winnipeg. His major subjects are English and History, both an excellent training for anyone interested in journalism. Mr. Isfeld taught for five years in Husavik, thirteen years in Benito and one year in Franklin. Last year he was taken on the Winnipeg school staff.

Arelius has a most worthy hobby. He is a naturalist. Readers of *Chicadee Notes* in the Winnipeg Free Press may have read some of the interesting reports that used to come from A. Isfeld of Benito. Maybe *The Icelandic Canadian* will benefit from his knowledge of the birdlife of Manitoba.

Mr. Isfeld has had some experience in writing. Contributions from him have at times appeared in the *Manitoba School Journal*.

Mrs. Isfeld, Steinunn, is a daughter of the pioneers, Gisli and Thora Jonsen, of Gimli. Her father died some years ago.

The Icelandic Canadian is fortunate in having such capable and trained people join the staff. By way of parenthesis the writer adds that he appreciates very much that they should be willing to render this gratuitous service with him as chairman.

These words of introduction might have ended on a sad farewell note but such is not the case. Axel Vopnfjord, the very capable and successful chairman for the last two years, is not leaving but remains on the Editorial Board. He did not step down and the present chairman did not step up; both will continue to give of their best in the service of the Magazine Committee.

—W. J. L.

In The Editor's Confidence

We are always learning and this is not an editorial "we". At the celebration in Gimli on May 21, last, on the occasion of the visit of His Excellency the Governor General of Canada, a group of Ukrainian-Canadian girls sang. They obviously had not had much training and besides the field from which the selection of voices was made, was limited. His Excellency's

address was timed into a crowded schedule, but he paused to tell the girls how much it pleased him to hear them. And it undoubtedly did please him, the effort, perhaps, rather than the quality. Later, the incident was drawn to His Excellency's attention. "I did that purposely", he replied, "the girls need the encouragement."



BERGPÓRSHVOLL SEEN FROM THE SOUTH—FAR BEYOND IT
PRÍHYRNINGUR RISES IN THE MIST

Sagasteads of Fire and Ice

Hlíðarendi and Bergþórshvöll

BY HEDIN BRONNER

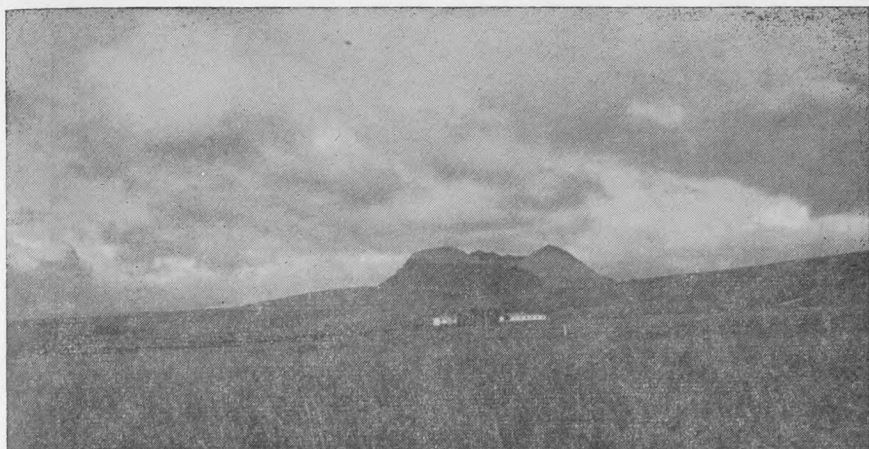
Photographs by the Author

"Fair is the hillside," spoke Gunnar of Njál's Saga, as he gazed back toward the sloping farm-lands of Fljótshlíð. Down by the sea, on the south coast of Iceland, a vessel was waiting to carry him away to safety and to exile. But on the ride across the vast gray gravel-flats between Fljótshlíð and the shore, his horse had stumbled and thrown him, and he had fallen so that he faced his farm Hlíðarendi. "Fair is the hillside; never before has it looked so fair to me—pale fields and new-mown meadows. And I shall ride home again, and journey nowhere"

It is nearly a thousand years since Gunnar of Hlíðarendi turned back to face the vengeance of his enemies under the relentless code of the blood-feud, but the dramatic scene still haunts the imagination of every visitor to the spot. Fair indeed is the hillside that drew Gunnar back. Patches of field and meadow rise in pastel greens from the dark gravel delta—locally termed sands—left by the shifting of the Markarfljót and its sister streams. Farther inland the barren

three-horned mountain Þríhyrningur broods over the farm-lands. In the opposite direction the odd black shapes of the Westman Isles float shimmering above the Sands—the sea around them not actually visible from this low vantage point, but often appearing to the eye as a thin strip of miraged water. Farther to the east stands the massive blue spread of the mountain Eyjafjöll, capped with snow and ice, cool and aloof, silent and majestic. And due east, at the inner wedge of the fan-shaped Markarfljót delta, hang the heavy arms of the glacier Mýrdalsjökull.

From up at Hlíðarendi itself the view is even more impressive. The farm-site is located about half-way up the steep slope of Fljótshlíð, some hundred feet above the level of the sands, with not a tree or rock to obstruct the clean sweep of the scenery. One gets the exhilarating sensation of hovering above the landscape—of possessing it, somehow. The endless dark-gray sands are cut by many winding ribbons of light—the waters of Þverá,



THE THREE-CORNERED MOUNTAIN ÞRÍHYRNINGUR BROODS OVER
THE SAGA-LAND OF FLJÓTSHLÍÐ

Áfall and Markarfljót, each with its many branches dividing and rejoining in a restless pattern. Straight ahead and sweeping away to the right lies the coast, thirteen miles distant. Those black specks silhouetted against the sea are farm buildings marking grassy oases on the flats; the spaces between them are ample and open and free. Out on the horizon lies the grotesque jumble of the Westman Isles, twenty to thirty miles away. But over to the left the sea and the coastline disappear behind the mighty backdrop of Eyjafjöll.

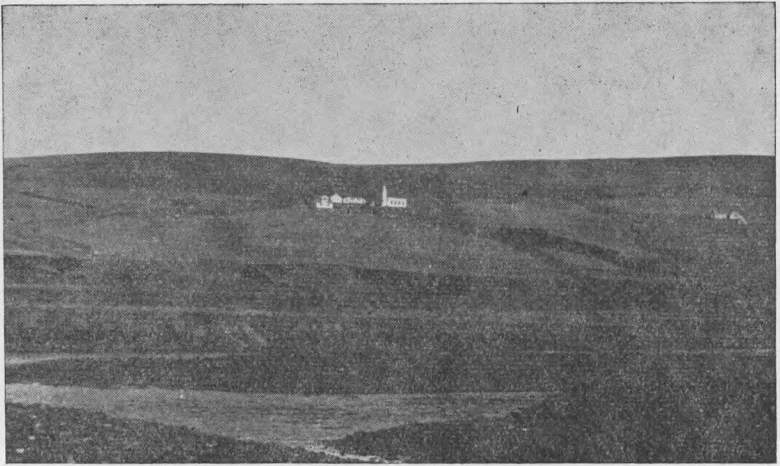
Hlíðarendi today is a neat little farm with modern white-painted buildings and a diminutive country church topped by a toy steeple. Near the foot of the slope an inconspicuous dirt road serves the few cars that ever disturb the scene. A few yards out on the sands—where Gunnar's cornfield must have been before the top-soil was washed away¹—a gravel causeway is taking

shape to provide an improved course for the road.

The tenant of the farm is Helgi Erlandsson, a weather-beaten and stalwart-looking man in his sixties. He disclaims descent from any of the personalities mentioned in *Njál's Saga*, his family having held this land only since the time of his grandfather. But he good-naturedly points out that he has named his son Gunnar and his dog Sám—the latter of course after Gunnar's dog in the saga. Helgi displays willingness and a touch of pride in showing the place to visitors. In a meadow just a stone's throw uphill from the farm-buildings he points out two parallel rows of grass-covered boulders, or humps in the turf, demarcating the foundation of Gunnar's dwelling. A trace of eagerness comes into his voice, and he speaks in the clipped phrases of the sagas as he makes the story of Gunnar's death move upon this natural scene.

Under cover of that little gully east of the meadow, along a lane bordering a trickling brook, Gunnar's enemies

¹ P. E. Kristian Kalund. *Bidrag til en Historisk-Topografisk Beskrivelse af Island*. Copenhagen, Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1877, Vol. I, p. 246.



HLÍÐARENDI SEEN FROM THE "SANDS"

stole down from the brow of the hill. There is no trace remaining of the lane, but it must indeed have been located in the gully, the only feature that could have afforded a concealed approach from the direction of the rendezvous at Þrihyrningur. In the western bank there is a rocky hollow named Sámþól—the lair of Sám; it used to be a cave with a narrow entrance, but during an earthquake many years ago one side of the roof fell in, exposing the whole length of it, and the rocks that dropped can still be seen lying loose within. Sám was an intelligent and faithful dog, apparently vicious toward strangers, for the attackers had to force Gunnar's neighbor to accompany them and coax it away from the farm. According to the saga, Sám was lying on top the roof of one of the buildings, not in the lair that is supposed to have been his. He was readily coaxed to the lane, where the attackers were waiting; but as soon as he saw strangers he flew upon them,

only to get a battle-axe in his skull. The Sám of today, however, is a little black-and-white shepherd dog that accompanies his master's narration of this episode with wagging tail and an ingratiating approach to the visitor.

The dying howl of the saga's Sám awakened Gunnar, and at the same time the attackers came out and approached the farmhouses. Gunnar then made his famous last stand, in the course of which his enemies had to pull the roof off his house in order to get at him. This they accomplished by running a series of doubled ropes from the ends of the rafters, attaching them to nearby boulders, and twisting with inserted sticks, tourniquet fashion. Helgi indicates one immense boulder partly inbedded in the soil off the northwest corner of the quadrangle, asserting that this probably was one of the anchorages used in this operation. On its far side this boulder is indeed of such shape that a looped rope would hold securely.



THE SUPPOSED RUINS OF GUNNAR'S DWELLING AT HLÍÐARENDI

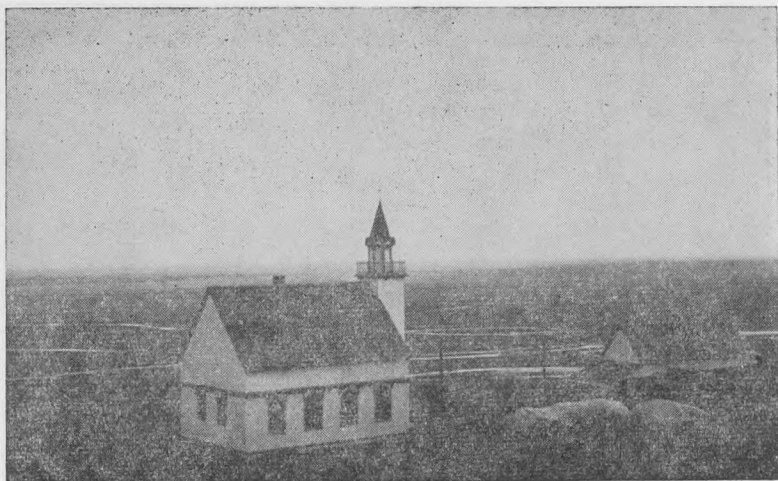
Just beyond the standing figure is the ravine which is believed to have afforded Gunnar's enemies cover for their approach to the farm.

Icelandic scholars are not unanimous in their acceptance of the local tradition that fixes this rough and sloping quadrangle as the site of Gunnar's dwelling. Sample excavations made over sixty years ago yielded no conclusive evidence,² and it has been questioned whether any early settler in Iceland would have selected a particularly steep and difficult slope for the site of his dwelling, when just a few feet farther down there was an ideal spot on a roomy and level shelf, where indeed the houses of today are situated. This is a matter that may never be finally settled; every visitor will have to weigh the evidence for himself.

But whatever the precise location of Gunnar's dwelling, the general situation of the farm and the relationship of it to the surrounding country-

side further the understanding of many episodes of the saga. One may wonder, for instance, how veritable armies of men and horses could have moved across the barren sides of Þríhyrningur without being discovered. But standing anywhere at Hlíðarendi one perceives that the mountain is entirely concealed from here by the long, low ridge of Fljótshlíð. Moreover, the apparent openness of Þríhyrningsháls, the great moorland that gently slopes up to the last rocky heights, is entirely deceptive. This is no mere lawn, to be traversed in a matter of minutes. It is marked by great undulations that form a series of minute unnoticeable ridges and depressions. Slogging on foot up the marshy wastes, one is continually disappointed to find the apparent top of the nearest ridge receding step by step, and one can see in a radius of scarcely a few hundred yards from any given spot. In addition, one episode of the

² Sigurður Vigfusson. "Rannsóknir Sögustaðir," *Árbók hins íslenska Fornleifafélags*, 1888-92. Reykjavík, Ísafoldarprentsmiðja H.F., pp. 35-62.



THE CHURCH AND FARM AT HLIÐARENDI

Gunnar could look across the "Sands," with their many interlacing streams and barely pick out Njál's farm Bergþórshvöll—on the horizon—too distant for the camera but located approximately in line with the steeple.

saga mentions a woodland, and Þríhyrningsháls may therefore have been at least partially tree-clad at the time.

Looking out over the Markarfljót sands, Gunnar was able to see an elevated woodland which he and his friend Njál held in common near Eyjafjöll. The saga calls this place Rauðaskriður, but Helgi Erlendsson confidently raises a work-worn hand to point out Stóra Dímon, a precipitous grass-covered rock rising nearly 600 feet from the sands. That, he asserts, was Rauðaskriður, and the woods that once surrounded it and dressed its lower slopes disappeared long before modern times—succumbing no doubt to the axe, to nibbling sheep, to floods and winds, and perhaps to volcanic ash-rains. Stóra Dímon does indeed appear to be the only feature today that fits into the picture woven through the narrative of the saga. It suits particularly well the conditions necessary for the episode in which Skarpheðin and the other sons of Njál went "up into" Rauðaskriður, on

the west side of Markarfljót, to hide out and watch for the approach of their enemy Þráin and his band.³ It was after they had swooped down to attack that Skarpheðin made his famous leap across the ice-banked stream—a distance described in one manuscript of the saga as "tólf álna," or over 28 feet!⁴

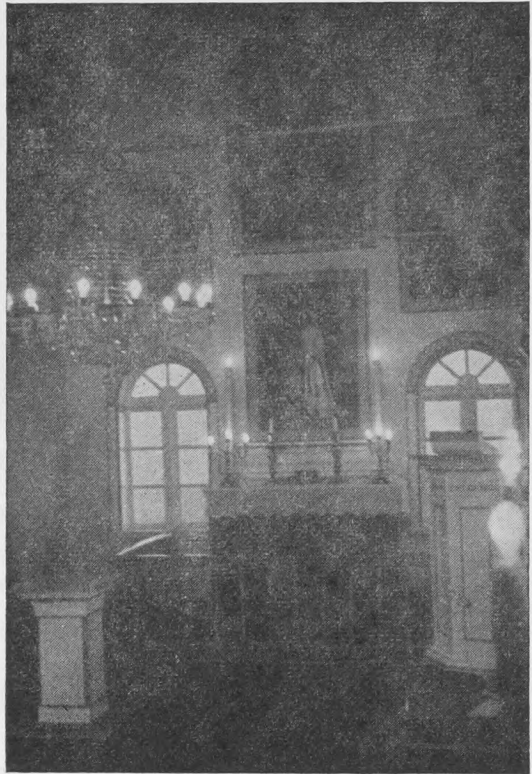
From Hliðarendi a sharp and familiar eye can just barely make out three gentle crests of a low hill silhouetted against the sea, far out across the sands and slightly to the right. On the western crest appears a minute square with a slightly lower extension trailing off its western side—a farmhouse with small outhouses adjoining it. This is Bergþórshvöll, where the burning of Njál took place. The low profile is not to be mistaken, and

³ *Íslendinga Sögur*. Reykjavík, Bókaverzlun Sigurðar Kristjánssonar, 1945, vol. X (Njál's Saga, Guðni Jónsson, ed.), p. 206.

⁴ Einar Ól. Sveinsson, ed. *Brennu-Njáls Saga*. Reykjavík, Hið Íslenska Fornritafélag, 1954, p. 234, note.

even Gunnar, in whose time the buildings must have been lower still, could undoubtedly pick out his friend's farmstead from among the few other features in this clean landscape. Once down on the sands, however, he had to set his course by other landmarks until he had ridden well beyond the half-way mark, when Bergþórshvoll again would appear on the horizon.

Today the ride would take two or three hours, depending on the weather and the condition of the horses. (A self-respecting farmer now, like a chieftain in Gunnar's time, would not normally set off on a ride without one or more extra horses in tow.) The many inter-lacing streams that cut across the sands do not present a serious obstacle for the sure-footed little Icelandic ponies; in fact, they can easily be crossed on foot by any one wearing good boots, and over a certain course starting from a point three or four miles east of Hlíðarendi and running to the main road just south of Stóra Dímon, they can be safely forded by automobile. The reason is that the main course of Markarfljót has been confined in recent times by the throwing up of an echeloned series of gravel dikes against floods. At the time of the saga, however, the entire delta must have been subject to shifting streams and frequent floods, and it is unlikely that Gunnar had a fixed route to Bergþórshvoll that he could follow at all



INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH
AT HLÍÐARENDI

times. It would probably be correct to say that the ride may have taken him less than three hours under ideal conditions, but it often must have taken him longer when sudden torrents forced him to seek new fording-places.

About midway between Hlíðarendi and Bergþórshvoll, the sands begin to show increasing areas of rough grass and finally yield to the great fertile Landeyjar. This region tends to be marshy, but it is dotted with low, broad and widely separated hills, upon each of which stands a well-drained



"FAIR IS THE HILLSIDE"
HLÍÐARENDI AS IT LOOKS TODAY

farm, its green infields brightly contrasting with the drab marsh-grass of the surrounding flatlands. It is upon such a hill—a picturesque triple-crested formation—that the site of Njál's farm Bergþórshvoll is to be found.

And once again the magic of the Icelandic landscape brings the saga to life. Here lay the doomed farm with its many low sod-roofed buildings. Here lived the great chieftain, surrounded by his loyal but unruly sons and by his great household of "inlaws", foster-children, farm-hands and thralls. Here he passed his many winters, growing in wisdom and honor, striving against the inexorable momentum of the clan-feuds, staring into the tragic future that was revealing itself to him—but calmly at last waiting for the inevitable.

With the distant surf rumbling faintly behind him, Njál had an uninterrupted view inland towards the places most intimately concerned with his tragic destiny. Ahead lay the long, low facade of Fljótshlíð, with its little

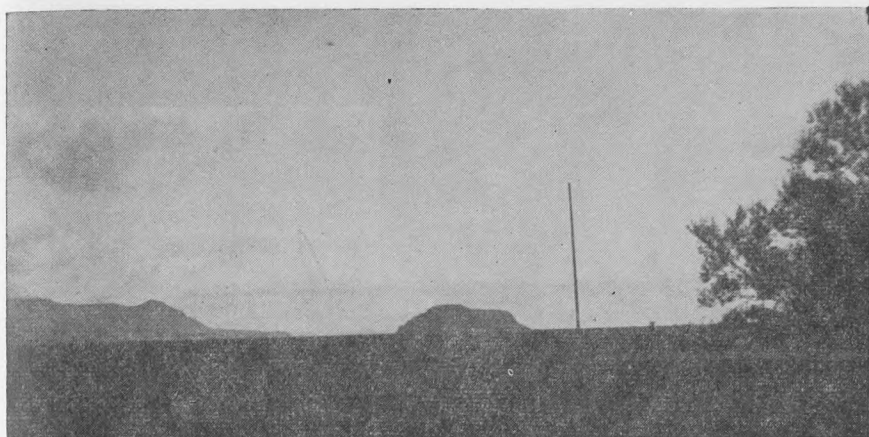
specks of farms—Gunnar's Hlíðarendi among them. Beyond rose the purple slopes of the volcano Hekla, the dull mass of Þríhyrningur, and the snowy heights of Tindfjallajökull. And towards the right loomed Eyjafjöll with its broad ice-cap Eyjafjallajökull, fronted by Rauðaskriður and by the low table-land Seljalandsmúli cut by several waterfalls. It was a landscape of enemies and friends—at greater distances only sensed, but at closer ranges clearly seen moving across the stage. Best study each visitor as far off as possible!

But as fate would have it, the approach from the east was screened by the hill-crest on that end of the farm, and this is what enabled Flosi, on a fateful August day in the year A.D. 1011,⁵ to lead the sworn enemies of Njál's sons unseen to within a few yards of their target. And there ensued one of the most dramatic episodes in all the literature of the North—the

⁵ Kristján Eldjárn and Gísli Gestsson. "Rannsóknir á Bergþórshvoll", *Árbók hins íslenska Fornleifafélags*, 1951-52. Reykjavík, Ísafoldarprentsmiðja H.F., 1952, pp. 5, 73.



HELGÍ ERLENDSSON OF
HLÍÐARENDI



VIEW ACROSS THE MARKARFLJÓT SANDS FROM MÚLAKOT, A FARM AT THE EASTERN END OF FLJÓTSHLÍÐ

In the center rises the silhouette of Stóra Dímon—the Rauðaskriður of the saga—where Skarpheðin waited to ambush Þráin. To the left is Seljalandsmúli, a foothill of ice-capped Eyjafjöll.

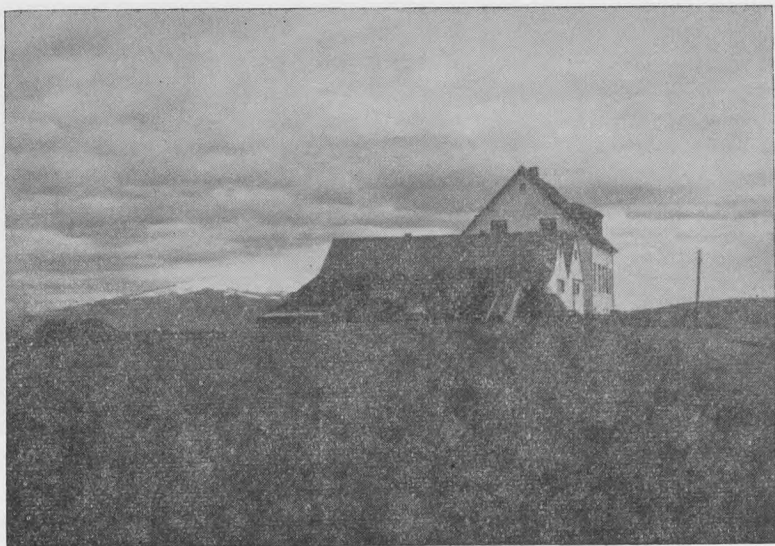
burning of the surrounded farm and the heroic death of all those who remained within it.

Ever since the time of the fire, Bergþórshvöll has been the site of an uninterrupted succession of farms. At the present time it has a modern white concrete dwelling-house with low adjoining outhouses. The tenant, Séra Sigurður Haukdal, pastor of the nearby churches Kross and Akurey, has no ruins or foundation-stones to show, but he and his grown son Eggert are willing enough to point out the spots associated with various events of the saga. Even in the area immediately west of the outhouses, where extensive excavations have been carried out, there is now no trace to be seen in the level sod.

Icelandic scholars first began to make sample excavations at Bergþórshvöll as early as 1883, in hopes of identifying Njál's dwelling and finding tangible proof of the historical veracity of the

saga—which indeed had already proven itself through internal and circumstantial evidence. At this time nothing worthy of note was unearthed. However, extensive further excavations made in 1927 and 1928 by Matthías Þórðarson, the director of the National Museum, unearthed the remains of a number of layers of floors a few yards west of today's farmhouses, indicating a succession of buildings erected upon roughly the same site through the centuries. Among these was a charred floor-layer which turned out to be the remains of a building used for drying corn, situated in a suitably deep stratum of soil to have dated from the time of Njál. Here also were found some charred remains of stalks and grains which are described by Sturla Friðriksson, agronomist of the University of Iceland, as six-row barley—probably of the four-row variety.

In 1951 the two archaeologists Kristján Eldjárn and Gísli Gestsson,



BERGPÓRSHVOLL FROM THE WEST

Extensive excavation in the area between the camera and the farm-buildings has uncovered ruins possibly dating from the time of Njál. In the background is a portion of Eyjafjallajökull.

still hoping to find the remains of Njál's dwelling-house, set about the excavation of the only reasonably-situated area that had not already been tried. Once again a charred floor-layer was found west of the farm and at suitable depth, but this time it proved to be the remains of a cow-shed. In their report, which also describes the excavations of 1927 and 1928, the investigators point out that if Njál's dwelling occupied the most favorable site, i.e. the crest occupied by the buildings of today, any charred remains would have been cleared away immediately following the fire in order to make room for a new dwelling in the same place.⁶ The remains of outhouses, on the other hand, might well have been left undisturbed for generations, as the next outhouses could be set anywhere—and preferably where there was

no rubble to be cleaned away. If the fire was wind-borne from the dwelling to the outhouses—as appears likely from the narrative—then there is added reason to believe that the dwelling occupied the same site as that of today, as the prevailing wind in Landeyjar at that season is easterly.⁷ That outhouses did burn is indicated by a statement in the saga that *all* the buildings caught fire: "Nú taka öll húsin að loga."⁸ With admirable sobriety, however, the Icelandic investigators conclude that "... the excavation failed to bring forth the final archaeological proof of the historical value of the tradition about the burning of Njál."⁹

In the middle of the eastern crest of Bergþórshvoll there is a slight circular depression in the soil, scarcely

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 72, 73.

⁸ *Ísl. Sög.*, vol X, p. 287.

⁹ *Eldjárn, op.cit.*, p. 75

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 72, 73.



BERGPÓRSHVOLL FROM THE EAST

deep enough to conceal a standing man from the view of the farm. This apparently is the "valley" which the saga mentions, where Flosi's band tied their horses and hid themselves to wait for nightfall. "Dalr var í hválinum, ok riðu þeir þangat ok bundu hesta sína ok dvöldusk þar, til þess er mjök leið á kveldit."¹⁰ A single glance suffices to show that the event could not possibly have taken place in that particular spot, and that the men must have waited on the flatlands east of the hill. But a discrepancy like this does not cast the over-all veracity of the saga in doubt and can be naturally explained as a defect in the unknown saga-writer's personal knowledge of the area; he has heard the story told, perhaps from several different sources, and he has heard the place described—but he has confused one or two minor details. A lucid commentary on this and other questions of the saga-writer's geographical knowledge has been

made by the distinguished Icelandic scholar, Professor Einar Ólafur Sveinsson, in the very readable introduction and notes to his recent new edition of the saga.¹¹ This material is unfortunately not available in English.¹²

In all other respects the topographical features around Bergþórshvöll support the details of the fire as reported in the saga. It will be remembered, for instance, that when the fire was well under way and several losses had been suffered by the attackers as well as the defenders, Skarpheðin and his faithful brother-in-law Kári decided to try to rush out over the wall and escape under cover of the smoke, which was moving in that direction—". . . því at hingat leggr allan reykin."¹³ Kári sprang first and got clear, but Skarpheðin fell back into the flames when

¹¹ Sveinsson, *op. cit.*, see especially pp. lxxxiv-c

¹² A new translation of *Njáls Saga* with an introduction and copious notes was recently published by ASF. —Ed.

¹³ *Ísl. Sög.*, vol X, p. 291.

¹⁰ *Ísl. Sög.*, vol X, p. 284

a burning beam broke under his feet. Kári bounded through the heaviest smoke, his hair and clothing ablaze, threw himself into a nearby brook, and then continued through the smoke to a pit or hollow, where he rested himself.

The story is plausible, and the scene can be vividly reconstructed at Bergþórshvoll today. All the sights and sounds of that night must have been madly confusing; showers of sparks, tongues of flame and rolls of smoke pouring out of every house and moving westward across the fields; more than 150 people—possibly as many as 200, counting women and children—moving about restlessly, now silhouetted, now aglow in the reflected light of the crackling fires; the shouts of the men, the crash of the debris, the bellowing of cattle and the screaming of the horses. Suddenly a flaming brand comes over the western wall of the dwelling, apparently followed by another. The men outside that wall scatter, cursing. One of them thinks he saw some one run out; another counters that it was only burning wood hurled out by those inside. The first flaming brand had indeed been hurled out by Kári, but the second was Kári himself, a living symbol of the revenge he was destined to spread over so many of those present.

At the foot of the western slope of Bergþórshvoll, where Kári is supposed

to have quenched his flames in a brook, there is now only a marsh to be found. The terrain seems to have been gradually drying out through the centuries, as late manuscript of the saga mentions a pond there, named Káratjörn.¹⁴ Two or three hundred yards away at the neighboring farm, now named Káragerði, there is a distinct hollow in the seaward side of the slope, just big enough for a man to conceal himself. This is where Kári ended his dash to freedom, and it is named Káragróf.

It is impossible for a saga-lover to visit Hlíðarendi and Bergþórshvoll without wishing to return again. The dramatic nature of the surroundings, so expressive of the spirit of the saga, will haunt and beckon more insistently many readers who have not had the privilege of seeing Iceland. Each new perusal brings fresh rewards: the teeming characters become more lifelike and distinctive; the settings become more clear—as when a landscape takes shape through a fading mist; and the dramatic impact of the simple narrative becomes more powerful. But through the scenes of blood and fire and ice, one character stands unique in his gentleness of heart and nobility of soul, and that is Gunnar of Hlíðarendi, who could not bring himself to flee from death, because his hillside was so fair.

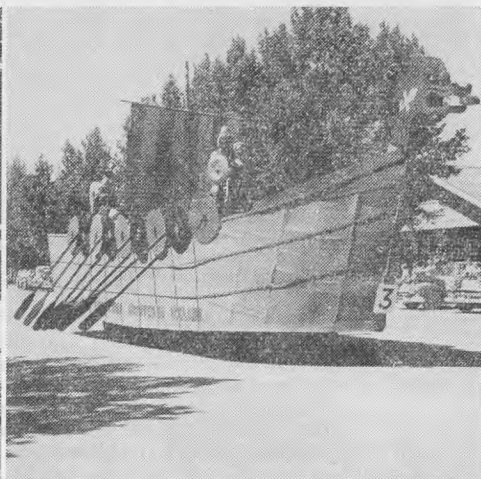
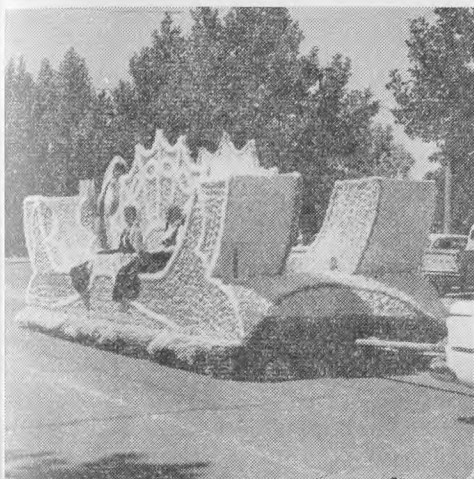
14 Sveinsson, *op. cit.*, p. 332, note.

Hedin Bronner has taught Norwegian language and literature at the University of Chicago and has contributed articles on Scandinavian subjects to Norwegian, Icelandic, and American publications—among them *THE REVIEW*. He has spent two years in Iceland and for the time being resides in Reykjavik.

ICELANDIC CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

at Spanish Fork, Utah, 1955

It is fitting that there be a permanent record of the first Icelandic Centennial in America. Other districts, especially the larger ones, may emulate the first one when their centennial milestones are reached. Additions to the record may be made later.



Representative Floats —

1. Queen, or Maid of The Mountain Float
3. Ingolfur Arnarson arrives in Iceland.
6. Meeting at Thingvellir, 930 A.D.
13. Jon Sigurdsson the Liberator.

GENERAL COMMITTEE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION



Front row, left: Thelma McKell, Fay Bearnson, J. Victor Leifson, John Y. Bearnson, Pres.; Byron T. Geslison, Judge Jos. E. Nelson, Lola Argyle
 Second row: Sarah Hansen, Eleanor Jarvis, Florence Harrison, Lyndal Hanson, Bertha Johnson, Bernice Bearnson, Cecil Curtis, Mary Andrus.
 Third row: Raymond G. Anderson, William H. Olson, Ted Leifson, Thor Leifson, Mark W. Johnson, Kenneth Runolfson, William M. Johnson, Wilford T. Johnson.

Excerpts from Greetings sent by The Icelandic Canadian Club to the Icelandic Association of Utah

This is an historic occasion. Yours is the oldest Icelandic settlement in North America. If scattered individuals and families are excepted yours may be one of the smallest Icelandic settlements. Now you are staging a Centennial celebration! . . .

The Icelandic Canadian Club is enriched by your example, the magazine encouraged by your deeds. This historic event will strengthen common bonds of a common ancestry and through that strength a common inheritance will be the better preserved.

The Icelandic Canadian Club
 and its magazine
The Icelandic Canadian.

Part of Letter in Reply

Judge W. J. Lindal,
 President of Icelandic Canadian Club
 Dear Judge Lindal:

We were very appreciative of the kind greetings that came from your club during our Centennial. We desire to express thanks for sending the Glíma Wrestlers for an exhibition along with their co-sponsor, Arthur Reykdal.

We only wish that you had been with us on this occasion. I am sure that if you contact those who were there from your vicinity, they will no doubt tell you about the Centennial. We enjoyed their presence and I am sure they had a good time while they were with us . . .

Sincerely yours,
John Y. Bearnson, pres

A Pilgrimage to Norseland

by PROFESSOR RICHARD BECK

II.

After an eventful and equally delightful seven weeks stay in Iceland, Mrs. Beck and I took passage on the steamer "Gullfoss" from Reykjavík to Copenhagen late in July. Deservedly considered the flagship of The Icelandic Steamship Company, "Gullfoss" is a beautiful and a thoroughly modern passenger ship, its captain, other officers and crew a splendid group of people. The passengers, several of whom we knew before, were excellent company, so our voyage on board popular "Gullfoss" was in every respect an enjoyable experience.

Our only stop between Iceland and Denmark was at Leith, the busy harbor city of Edinburgh, where we had the better part of a day at our disposal. Visiting Scotland's famed capital is always a pleasure, although on this occasion the view of its charming surroundings and historic monuments was marred by rain during much of the day.

The voyage from Leith to Copenhagen was pleasant, though the weather might have been warmer. No one familiar with the history of the Scandinavian countries can, however, travel that route without recalling that he is following the ancient Viking trail, and, if he is of an imaginative bent of mind, visualizing their proud dragon-ships sailing, as it were, alongside his modern passenger ship or crossing its path.

We stayed only one day in Copenhagen at that time, continuing our journey to Oslo the same evening.

Nearly all of the next month, the larger part of August, we spent in Norway, travelling extensively through that beautiful country, visiting cultural institutions and places of historical interest, in particular those districts in the western part of the country from which a large number of the original Norwegian settlers of Iceland came in days of old.

Our week in Oslo was in every way a worthy prelude to our unforgettable tour of Norway. Let me, however, at this point record our debt of gratitude to The Norwegian Foreign Office, The International League of Norwegians (Nordmanns-Forbundet), The Norwegian Broadcasting System, and such friends as Secretary-General and Mrs. Arne Kildal, Dr. C. J. Hambro and Dr. and Mrs. Torstein Höverstad, for hospitality and honors accorded us during our stay in the Norwegian capital. Among the highlights of the week there were: a private audience with Crown Prince Olav; the presentation of greetings from Governor Norman Brunsdale of North Dakota to Prime Minister Oscar Torp; and the participation in a broadcast, short-waved to Norwegians in all parts of the world.

Oslo is beautifully located amidst forest-clad sloping hills on lovely Oslofjord. It is not only a great metropolis with a total population of some 450,000, but, as befits the capital, an outstanding cultural center, rich in museums and educational institutions. We were primarily interested in visiting them, for ours was a combined study and pleasure trip.

No one spending any considerable time in Oslo should fail to visit The National Museum at Bygdøy. We shall long remember the Sunday, a bright and warm August day, which we spent among its cultural monuments.

Rightly, we began our day in that magnificent historical collection by visiting what is perhaps its most remarkable feature and certainly one of its greatest attractions, the Viking Ships. There are three of them, all of which were found near Oslo Fjord. Two of these ancient ships, The Oseberg Ship and the Gokstad Ship, have been completely reconstructed in their former glory, while the third one, the Tune Ship, has only been partly preserved.

The Oseberg Ship, which is seventy-one feet long, seventeen feet amidships, and has fifteen pairs of oars, was built around the year 800 A.D., and has been characterized as "the show-piece among the ship-finds of the Viking Era". It has further been established that this beautifully built and proud ship was a pleasure craft belonging to a Norwegian Queen, and intended for short voyages in calm waters and fair weather, a purpose which it appears to have accomplished admirably.

The Gokstad Ship, on the other hand, which was built in the second half of the ninth century and constructed for regular use, may be looked upon as typical of the Viking ships of the day. It is seventy-six feet long, seventeen feet wide amidships, and had sixteen pairs of oars. It is indeed "a handsome vessel, well built and adapted to its purpose, a work of long experience and fine craftsmanship" (Brøgger and Shetelig: *The Viking Ships*, Oslo 1951, p. 111).

One should add that all the Viking ships in question were found in burial

mounds, for "the ships (of the Norsemen of old) were not only a means of transportation; they played an important part in the social and religious life of the Vikings, and it is largely from the discoveries of the ship-graves that we can form an idea of the society in which they lived. Home life, religion, warfare, arts and crafts—all are reflected in the Viking ships and their grave furnishings" (Preface to Brøgger and Shetelig: *The Viking Ships*).

The Viking Ships at Bygdøy are indeed an eloquent reminder of the far-flung and important voyages and explorations of the Norsemen. They were "pioneers of freedom" in many places besides Iceland, although the remarkable Republic which they established there constitutes their most glorious achievement in the realm of parliamentary governments.

The Open-Air Museum at Bygdøy is another of its main attractions. Here farmsteads from all parts of Norway have been gathered together and arranged in geographical order; they reveal the development of the old, decorative style of building and cast bright light on Norwegian rural life, for the old furniture and the corresponding farm implements are all in their places. Occupying a central position in this fascinating collection of buildings is the ancient Stave Church from Gol in Hallingdal, a splendid example of this unique type of Norwegian churches which flourished in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Still another notable attraction in the Bygdøy Museum is Henrik Ibsen's study. Anyone knowing the penetrating works of the world-renowned Norwegian dramatist can envision him at work at his desk and feel the presence of his challenging spirit. His works

were especially fresh in our minds, for we had shortly before seen his drama **The Wild Duck** magnificently presented at the National Theatre in Reykjavík, and we also had the pleasure of seeing his play **A Doll's House** performed with equal brilliance at the National Theatre in Oslo.

Among the outstanding sights within Oslo itself is its striking City Hall with its wealth of exterior and interior decorations by leading Norwegian artists. Of special interest to the readers of this magazine is the series of many-colored reliefs, carved in wood and mounted on the walls of both sides of the Court Yard known as "The Yggdrasil Frieze". This series of pictures is built around motifs inspired by the **Poetic Edda**.

In Oslo we also visited a number of other historic buildings and museums. The most impressive and unusual of these is the celebrated out-door collection of the sculptural works of Gustav Vigeland, which form a whole park of their own works in which the people of Oslo take due pride. At once picturesque and symbolic these sculptures must be seen in their fitting surroundings to be fully appreciated. Two of them may, however, be singled out for special mention: The Fountain, an original and poetic portrayal of man's life from the cradle to the grave; the gigantic granite Column with its numerous entwined human figures, where, as one writer has explained, the sculptor "portrays the merciless struggle of life, together with humanity's yearning for the higher regions, for perfection, for God".

Whatever one may think of Vigeland's art, and it has been highly controversial, its strength and impressiveness will leave few observers unmoved. And one thing is certain: it reveals

tremendous creative power, sweep and energy.

During our stay in Oslo, at the gracious invitation of Mr. Bjarni Ásgeirsson, the Icelandic Minister to Norway, and Mrs. Ásgeirsson, we made a special automobile trip to Eidsvoll, a trip which we shall always gratefully remember for many reasons: the lovely summer weather, the scenic beauty all along the way, the pleasant company, and the splendid reception on the part of Mr. Jørgen Mathiesen, owner of the Eidvoll estate, and Mrs. Mathiesen, not to forget the enjoyable evening at the ministerial residence upon our return to Oslo.

Eidsvoll is, as is well known, the great shrine of the Norwegian nation, for it was the meeting place of the national assembly which met in the spring of 1814, and which drew up and signed the Norwegian constitution, an event ever since commemorated on May 17 by Norwegians everywhere.

The assembly was held in the venerated Eidsvoll Building, which has for years been a national museum specially dedicated to the historic events which took place there during those fateful spring days of 1814. It was indeed instructive as well as inspiring to walk through those sacred halls, and most of all to enter the **sanctum sanctorum**, the assembly hall itself with its sturdy wooden benches bearing the names of the delegates in their respective places, and with their pictures solemnly looking down from those historic walls.

In Iceland we had on several occasions been privileged to visit Þingvellir, the famed site of the more than thousand years old Icelandic Althing, and been moved to the depths of our hearts by the grandeur, the rich history and sanctity of the place. Similar feel-

ings stirred our hearts as we stood on Eidvoll's hallowed ground and contemplated the long struggle for freedom waged by our Norwegian kinsmen. It was gratifying to recall how important a factor Snorri Sturluson's **Heimskringla** had been in keeping alive the Norwegian spirit of independence and freedom, a factor which though indirectly yet basically contributed to the regained liberty of the Norwegian people. This our Norwegian kinsmen have generously recognized, most notably by the presentation to the Icelandic nation of the Snorri statue at Reykholt.

Shortly after our visit to Eidsvoll we left Oslo on our tour of the country, going by train northward through fertile and historic Gudbrandsdal valley on our way to Trondheim. Our first goal was the town of Lillehammer, located on Lake Mjøsa, Norway's largest lake.

Lillehammer is noted for its open-air museum of farm buildings (The Sandvig Collections) from all parts of Gudbrandsdal, which reveal in a memorable fashion the culture and daily life of the region down through the centuries. During our visit to the museum we were caught in a heavy rain storm and sought shelter in a 500 year old farm house, simple but sturdy in structure. We thought what a story it could tell, having, literally, weathered the storms of the ages.

Lillehammer also owes its fame in no small measure to the circumstance that Sigrid Undset, the internationally renowned novelist, resided there for many years, and her home still stands there intact. It is not open to the public, but thanks to the kindness of her son, Jens Benedict, and his charming wife, we were permitted to visit it. Built in the traditional rural style of

the district, the home of the great interpreter of medieval Norway is strikingly expressive of her personality and literary interests. We were deeply moved as we entered her study, looked at the half-finished page of her last manuscript, still in her typewriter, and inspected her private library, including several Icelandic books. This was not at all surprising, because she had translated several of the Icelandic sagas into Norwegian and written a novel dealing with the saga period. I could readily visualize her at work at her desk as I had seen her when I had the pleasure of meeting her during World War II in New York City, and my heart was filled with gratitude for her monumental literary works which give life and color to a bygone age and make its men and women our contemporaries.

From Lillehammer we continued our journey by train through increasingly scenic Gudbrandsdal and all the way up into the mountains, where towering snow-clad peaks rise in their majesty on the horizon. Upon the mountain plateau we transferred to a bus, and headed eastward on our way to Røros, near the Swedish border, enjoying the varied scenery that lovely summer evening, until darkness gradually enfolded the landscape.

Røros is an old mining town which still retains much of its original and special atmosphere; as a matter of fact, some of the copper mines in the vicinity are still in operation. The rugged moorlands surrounding the town possess a summer attraction of their own, but must be rather desolate in winter.

The Røros church is a large and historic edifice, known as "The Cathedral of the Highlands", and the town also has a number of old and interesting houses, harking back to the early

mining days. On the other hand, it proudly boasts a splendid and thoroughly modern tourist hotel.

Our principle purpose in going to Röros was to visit my good friend Johan Falkberget, the noted Norwegian author, whose works have for a long time attracted me specially and with whom I have corresponded for years. He is himself the son of a miner; he worked in the mines during his early days and, because of his novels dealing with the Norwegian miners and their life, occupies a special and prominent place in Norwegian literature. These novels are marked by penetrating insight and understanding, and make absorbing reading.

Falkberget lives on his paternal farm in the vicinity of Röros, where it was our pleasure to enjoy the warm hospitality extended to us by him and Mrs. Falkberget. It was a real privilege to become personally acquainted with the aged author (he recently passed the 75 year mark), for, besides being a highly gifted poet, he is a noble-minded idealist, deservedly very popular and highly respected by the Norwegian people.

Together with our hosts we were also privileged to spend a delightful evening in the near-by summer home of Mr. and Mrs. Trygve Lie. It was for us an occasion to be long remembered and it was both enlightening and stimulating to hear the former and first Secretary-General of the United Nations comment on international questions. He was then at work on his book dealing with the United Nations, which has since appeared in English under the title **In the Cause of Peace—Seven Years With the United Nations**. It is a well-written, timely and challenging book.

From Röros we continued our jour-

ney across the mountains towards Trondheim. The Trondelag region abounds in historical places. The most famous of these is Stiklestad in Verdal, the scene of the historic battle in 1030, in which King Olafur Haraldsson (St. Olav) fell, but was in reality the victor, as his cause emerged victorious in the end. In death he accomplished the great things which he had dreamt of doing in life—the establishment of Christianity in Norway, the unifying of the country and its liberation from a foreign yoke.

Many of the leading settlers of Iceland came from the Trondheim area, including the forefathers of the famed and influential family of Oddaverjar, which left an indelible mark on the political and cultural history of Iceland.

Trondheim, Norway's third largest city, is also one of its very oldest, founded by King Olafur Tryggvason in the year 997. It is, therefore, highly fitting that a statue of the heroic missionary king, facing the sea, graces the city's main square.

It remained, however, for King Olafur Haraldsson to rebuild Nidaros, as the city was named for centuries, and make it a worthy royal residence. The city achieved its lasting fame after King Olafur had been elevated to sainthood, a church, enshrining his bones, erected in his honor, and pilgrims had begun flocking there from all directions.

To this day the Trondheim Cathedral, dedicated to St. Olav, is the city's great glory, and also is considered the most beautiful and noblest ecclesiastical edifice in Scandinavia. This "Gothic masterpiece of Norway", as the cathedral has been well characterized, must be seen, in order to be fully appreciated in all its external grandeur,

internal beauty and rich decorative detail.

Adjoining the Cathedral is the venerable Cathedral School, more than 800 years old; we had the privilege of inspecting it under the guidance of the Master of the School, Dr. Asbjörn Överaas, a noted scholar, and afterwards we were hospitably entertained in his

home. The Cathedral School has graduated many of the cultural leaders of the Norwegian nation, and its influence has extended far beyond the shores of Norway, for among its distinguished sons was the founder of St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota.

(Continued in next issue)

World Jurists Re-Elect Thorson Congress President



Hon. J. T. Thorson

Hon. Joseph T. Thorson, President of the Exchequer Court of Canada, was re-elected president of the International Congress of Jurists at its sessions held at the end of June this year in Athens, Greece, where leading jurists from 49 countries attended. Mr. Justice Thorson presided during the Congress deliberations.

He was first elected president of the International Congress at its meeting in West Berlin, Germany, in 1952, when representatives attended from

43 countries of the world.

This internationally known scholar and jurist was born, raised and educated in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Stefan Thorson who emigrated from Iceland to Canada in 1887.

He attended Winnipeg schools and Manitoba College where he graduated in Arts in 1910. He was chosen Rhodes Scholar the same year and subsequently attended New College, Oxford University, England, where he was awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1912. He was called to the Middle Temple bar, London, and to the Manitoba bar in 1913.

He served overseas with the Canadian army in World War One, resuming his law practice in Winnipeg after hostilities ceased. He was elected member of the Canadian Parliament for Winnipeg South Centre in 1926, and for Selkirk constituency in 1935 and again in 1940.

In 1941 he was named Minister of National War Services in Canada's wartime cabinet, and in 1942 appointed President of the Exchequer Court.

He is married, his wife the former Miss Aileen B. Scarth of Virden and Winnipeg, Man. They have three children. Their home is in Rockcliffe Park, Ottawa

TÓMAS GUÐMUNDSSON

Author of the Front Cover Verse

The Front Cover Verse is taken from the following poem in the translation of Magnús Á. Árnason, for some years of British Columbia and now of Reykjavík, Iceland.

FAGRA VERÖLD

Svo mánablið og björt sem mjöll,
ó, björt sem mjöll skein ásýnd þín
Og hingað komstu kvöldin öll,
og kvöldin öll var drukkið vín.
Og stundin leið við ljóð og ást,
við ljóð og ást. Ó, glaða stund
og ljósu armar, liljumund.
Ó, ljúfa stund, unz gæfan brást!

En hvi skal trega horfinn dag,
sem heiður, bjartur framhjá rann?
Og hvi skal syrgja ljúflingslag,
sem lífsglaðast í hjörtum brann?
Um ást og vín bað æskan þín,
og alls þess naut sá þúsundfallt,
sem lifað hefur líf sitt allt
einn ljúfan dag, við ást og vín.

Ei þekkti ég ást, sem aldrei dó.
En ást, sem gerði lífið bjart
um stundarbið, ég þekkti þó.
Og þegar næturhúmið svart
um sálu mína síðast fer
og slökkur augna minna glóð,
þá veit ég hvaða ljúflingsljóð
mun líða hinzt að eyrum mér:

Ó, fagra veröld, vín og sól,
ég þakka þér!

O BEAUTEOUS WORLD

So lunar-mild, and white as snow,
O white as snow your face appeared.
And you came hither every night
And every night we sipped our wine.
The evenings passed with light
and love,
With light and love. O happy hour,
O wondrous arms, O lily hand.
O lovely hour—till fortune failed.

Why should we mourn for yesterday
Which bright and sunlit passed us by?
And why bewail the fairy songs
Which flamed our hearts with joy
of life?
For love and wine your youth did pray,
And he enjoys that thousand fold
Who lives and spends his entire life
One lovely day, with love and wine.

No love I knew that never died.
But love that made existence bright
One happy hour, I knew full well.
And when the pitch-black gloom of
night
My soul at last engulfs and shrouds
And quells the embers of my eyes,
I know what kind of fairy song
Will float through air to catch my ear:

O beauteous world, O wine, O sun,
accept my thanks!

In November, 1933, Tómas Guðmundsson, Reykjavík's popular poet, published a book of poems "Fagra veröld". It was sold out in a few days, a second edition was published the following month and a third edition in

December, 1934. The translation with the original appears in "20th Century Scandinavian Poetry", published in 1950 and printed in Denmark. It consists of a selection of twentieth century Scandinavian poems and the Icelandic group is edited by Stefán Einarsson of Johns Hopkins University. In his Introduction, Prof. Einarsson says of Tómas Guðmundsson:

"A great master of form, Tómas Guðmundsson was to carry the Icelandic lyric of this century to its highest development. Beginning as a purebred romantic in his early verse (1925) he emerged in 1933 (O, Beauteous World) as a romanticist whose understanding had been deepened by nostalgia for bygone days, and colored by a fresh sensuous love for present-day Reykjavík. He was, in fact, the first poet to sing the capital's praise."

Dr. Edward J. Thorlakson, Professor of Languages and Dramatics in the University of New York, in his introductory remarks to a translation of another and longer poem of Tómas Guðmundsson, "City of the Dead", "Gamalt ljós," says: (see Icel. Can. Vol. II, no 4):

"The reason for Tómas Guðmundsson's popularity is not far to seek. Though the Icelanders may be justly proud of the intricate splendor of their poetry, they have rarely achieved the intimacy, spontaneity and lightness that dances through every page of Tómas Guðmundsson. . . Sometimes he writes without rhymes and in a free meter, but the texture of his verse is firm and sparkles with the alliteration, assonance and connotations of sound which are the glory of Icelandic poetry."

The following are examples in the original and in a translation of

Tómas Guðmundsson's free verse. The first is the first verse in "Morgunljóð úr brekku":

"Heyr morgunljóð úr brekku,
ég er silfurlindin litla,
og leik mér við að skoppa
og hoppa
niður kletta.
Og blómin flykkjast saman
um bakka mína á vorin
og bara, ef þau sjá mig
þau flýta sér að spretta.
Og taki ég að syngja
þau hlusta hrifin á mig
og heila vendi flétta
til dýrðar minni snilli".

The second is the opening and closing lines of "City of the Dead" in the translation of Dr. Edward J. Thorlakson:

The night is long for him
who awaits the dawning.
In times gone by we sat
by the well together.
From its quiet depth
the stars looked up at us brightly,
And twinkled a friendly greeting —
aeons and aeons ago.

Closing lines:

O Night, in whose bosom
sorrows and joys are sleeping,
You keep in the faded leaf
the pride of the summer.
I know that your Eyes enclose
both the light and the darkness.
In your peaceful shadows I look
for the light that has left me.
Make out of my anguish a song
that will sooth my longing
For that which I loved,
but now has departed forever.

—W. J. L.

DR. PETER OLAFSON

by KIRSTIN HERMANN OLAFSON



For many years a certain American scientist in the field of animal diseases has been attracting attention, both nationally and internationally. This man is of Icelandic parentage. Yet, as far as I know, comparatively few Canadian or American Icelanders are acquainted with his work. Maybe this is so, for he is no publicity seeker.

His work has been such, however, that it has been widely recognized in scientific circles. For several years he has been listed in *Who is Who in America*. At present he is living and working in Tel Aviv, Israel, having been invited by Israel's scientists to study a certain cattle disease that has been playing havoc with Israel's livestock industry.

This man is Dr. Peter Olafson, professor of veterinary pathology, in the famous New York State Veterinary College, at Cornell University.

Peter was born January 2, 1897, the son of Olafur K. and Sigurbjorg, nee Thomasson, Olafson, pioneers of the Gardar community in North Dakota. He grew up on his father's grain and

livestock farm, and from earliest boyhood took an interested and increasingly active part in the operation of the farm.

He attended the local district school. One of his fellow pupils has told me that from the first both students and teachers were impressed with his keen understanding, his power of accurate analysis, his purposeful attitude and his energetic application to any work in hand.

At the age of seventeen, Peter took part in a state-wide essay contest on the subject of the Dairy Cow. Now his old interest in cattle stood him in good stead, for, to his own surprise and the gratification of the family, he was awarded the first prize, a beautiful pedigreed Jersey heifer, which became a great favorite with all members of the family.

Whether this achievement had any influence on his choice of a career, I cannot say with any degree of certainty. But, having finished high school at the preparatory department of the University of North Dakota, Peter enrolled in the fall of 1922 as a student of veterinary medicine at the Agricultural College at Fargo. Here he studied for two years, winning a scholarship and then entered the New York State Veterinary College, at Cornell University. In 1926 he graduated as Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, and in 1927 as Master of Science.

During the summers of 1927 and 1930, he did postgraduate work in pathology at the University of Chicago. In 1935, he studied at Munich, Leipzig and Copenhagen. Through all his career as a student, he supported himself mostly, if not entirely, by

scholarship money.

In 1926 Dr. Olafson became a member of the faculty of New York State Veterinary College and since 1936 has been a professor of pathology. Since 1946 he has been the head of the department of pathology and bacteriology, a very large department, with a personnel of about sixty, ranking from helpers and technicians to laboratory directors and professors.

Like other young Americans of the World War I period, Peter served his time in the army. He is listed as consultant to the Armed Forces Institute of Veterinary Pathology, from 1948 to 1952. He is a member of numerous national and international organizations, some of them dedicated to the study and eradication of animal diseases, but others concerned with general scientific subjects, as for instance Sigma Ki, of which he is member.

During the earlier years of Dr. Olafson's professorship, most of his time was spent in teaching, but since 1946 he has been occupied chiefly with research and study of animal diseases. He has made an intensive study of brain tumors in animals and has collected and preserved tumor specimens, thus accumulating a collection that is said to be the largest and most complete of its kind, anywhere. He has also made other noteworthy collections of diseased animal tissues, valuable for study purposes.

Many are the discoveries Dr. Olafson has made in his field of endeavor. He still has many to write up, but in a series of treatises he has already given the world the benefit of some of his findings. A few, chosen at random, are the following:

1. Brain Tumors in Animals.

2. Toxoplasmosis in Domestic Animals. This is the first description published in our country concerning this disease, which affects dogs, cats and sheep.
3. Virus Diarrhea of cattle. This is an original description of a disease which now is being studied in all parts of the world.
4. Hyperkeratosis (X Disease), or Highly Chlorinated Napthalene Poisoning. This treatise is responsible for the invitation by Israel scientists to study this disease as it manifests itself in their country.

It was because of this treatise too, that a year or two ago he was called to Texas to study the then somewhat mysterious X Disease, which at the time was epidemic there, and threatened to ruin the livestock industry. Dr. Olafson spent some time in Texas, discovered the source of infection and thus made it possible to successfully combat the disease that already had caused a financial loss, running into millions of dollars.

Dr. Olafson, already recognized as an outstanding scientist, still has numerous interesting problems that call for a solution, but will undoubtedly dispose of them with the same clarity of thought and vigorous dispatch that has always characterized his work, and has lifted him to his present eminence.

In 1929, Dr. Olafson married Miss Harriette Elizabeth Smith, a teacher, of Syracuse, N. Y. They have four very attractive daughters, who are good students, and talented, especially in music. Consequently these girls have all been selected as Miss Ithaca High School, each in her senior year. The family residence is in Ithaca, N. Y.

A Well-Known Pioneer Dies in Winnipeg



Jon J. Bildfell

With the passing of **Jon J. Bildfell**, August 17, this year, the Icelandic group in this country lost one of its outstanding pioneers. Born May 1, 1870 in Arnessýsla, Iceland, he came to Canada in 1887. Through hard work he saved enough to take a course at a business college and then by teaching during the summer months he financed himself through a three-year collegiate course.

In the early nineties he was an active member of the Icelandic Labor Association which helped materially to improve the position of the Icelandic laborer and in so doing won recognition for Icelandic immigrants.

In 1903 he married Soffia Thorsteinsdottir. She survives him as well as their son, Dr. Jon A. Bildfell and two daughters, Mrs. J. E. McRae and Mrs. H. T. Hough.

To the end of his days Mr. Bildfell took a keen interest in all Canadian Icelandic affairs. He was a devoted member of the First Lutheran church,

president of the congregation for several years and was regularly elected delegate to the annual conventions of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod. He was a staunch supporter of the Jon Bjarnason Academy and headed its School Board for many years.

Mr. Bildfell played an important role in the founding of the Icelandic Steamship Company by helping to sell shares in the company to Icelandic people on this continent and by representing these shareholders at the organization meeting of the company in 1914. He was a member of the Board of Directors 1917-1922. Mr. Bildfell was one of the founders of the Icelandic National League, served as its president for four years and as secretary for a number of years. He was elected honorary life member of that organization.

For ten years, 1917-1927, Mr. Bildfell was manager of the Columbia Press Ltd. and editor of the Icelandic weekly, *Lögberg*. He appreciated good literature, translated novels and essays from English into Icelandic and wrote several historical sketches. He was an effective public speaker; at meetings and conventions his forthright words always carried weight.

Mr. Bildfell's interests were by no means limited to matters Icelandic. He was well versed in political affairs, both local and national, and was elected honorary life member of the Manitoba Liberal Association.

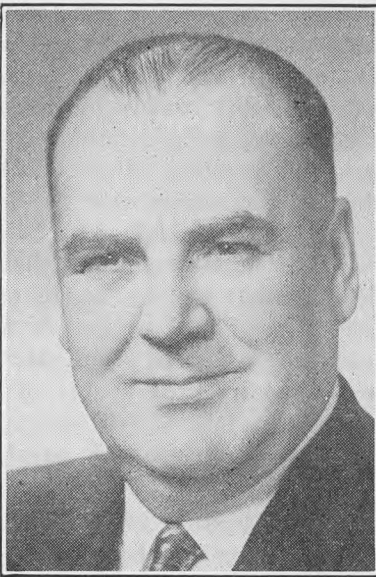
Jon J. Bildfell always retained the adventurous spirit of the pioneer. In 1897 he went to the Klondike. At the age of seventy he undertook, at the request of the Hudson's Bay Co., to go

to Baffin Land and Greenland to give instruction to the Eskimos in preparing eider-down for marketing. He returned after two years hale and hearty as ever.

In recognition of his services, the Icelandic government conferred on Mr.

Bildfell the Grand Cross of the Icelandic Order of the Falcon and the Icelandic Steamship Company extended an invitation to him to visit Iceland. His name will always have a place of honor in the annals of the Icelandic pioneers on this continent. —I. J.

ATTENDS DANISH CONSULAR CONGRESS



Consul G. L. Johannson

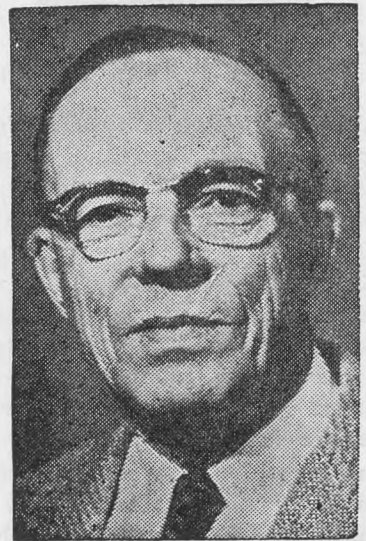
Grettir L. Johannson, Consul of Iceland and of Denmark for the Prairie Provinces, accepted an invitation of the Danish State Department to attend a Danish Consular Congress held in Copenhagen July 15–18. Accompanied by Mrs. Johannson he left for Iceland in May and attended the annual meeting of the Icelandic Steamship Company as a representative of its shareholders on this continent.

After the meetings and festivities in Copenhagen, which concluded with a court reception in Christianborg

Castle, when the honorary consuls and their wives were presented to King Fredrick IX and Queen Ingrid, Mr. and Mrs. Johannson travelled extensively through Europe before returning home late in August.

★

FISHERIES DIRECTOR



The Manitoba Government announced in May of this year the appointment of **Sigurbjorn Sigurdson** of Winnipeg as Director of Fisheries for the province, within the Department of Mines and Natural Resources.

Mr. Sigurdson comes to his new post from the position of Assistant Director of Game and Fisheries. He entered the Manitoba Government service in 1940 as supervisor of fisheries.



College Education Leadership Training

*the career opportunity of the year
for high school students*

High School Students may now get a free college education while qualifying for the Queen's Commission in the Navy, Army or Air Force, under the Regular Officer Training Plan.

Successful candidates will attend Royal Military College, Royal Roads, Collège Militaire Royal de Saint-Jean, or designated Canadian universities, as cadets in the Regular Forces.

They will receive service pay plus board and lodging, plus tuition costs at college, will take paid training with their chosen service in summer months and on completion of academic courses, serve Canada as Regular Force officers with the option of release after three years.

Applicants must have Senior Matriculation or equivalent, except for Collège Militaire Royal de Saint-Jean, where requirement is Junior Matriculation. Age limits for Collège Militaire Royal de Saint-Jean are 16 to 20 on 1st January of the year of entrance, for all others 16 to 21 on 1st January of the year of entrance. Applicants must be single, physically fit, and meet officer selection standards.

For full information write to the Regular Officer Training Plan Selection Board, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, or to any of the following:—

The Registrar, Royal Military College, Kingston, Ont.

The Registrar, Royal Roads, Victoria, B.C.

**The Registrar, Collège Militaire
Royal de Saint-Jean, St. Jean, P.Q.**

Some Aspects of Music in Iceland

by HELGI SIGURÐUR HELGASON

Many interesting studies could be made about the development of music in Iceland if one had at hand proper data and references for such research. Unfortunately the writer's library is quite inadequate and incomplete. As a result he must depend upon hidden memories, which may or may not be adequate, as they appear before his mind.

The uncharted wealth of chants and Folk-Songs that come from an ancient civilization should be thoroughly ransacked and tabulated by experts in this field for the benefit of future generations. In this connection may be mentioned the "Vikivaki" or Dance Songs, and the "Toast" or Drinking Songs, and the "Tvi" (two) songs— Patriotic Songs in duet form. These three patterns may be from the pre-Christian era. Then there were chants in many forms to fit in with the poetry.

In the year 1000 A.D., Christianity was officially enacted by the Althing (Parliament). Iceland at that time was the only Republic in the world. Roman Catholic Christianity having been established, the church chants replaced the earlier songs and chants, for all things were to be made new.

As time went on, many things were forgotten but here and there many of the old things were revived and we find, for example, the Quint songs which I shall now try to explain.

The Quint Song (Tvisöngur) is, perhaps, pre-historical and probably founded on the Dorian Scale. It is an attempt to sing in two-voice refrain. The voices travel together, fifths up

or down, using the quadrant or four-line verse. The pitch is established in unison. The descant moves two tones up and the baritone two tones down, making the sub-dominant. Thus the fifth is established. Before singing the last line, a common tone is used again. The baritone steps up a Minor third and the descant steps down a major third. This is the dominant (fifth) chord minus the third. Thus the closing cadence is completed. It is quaint, rather weird, but beautiful. Modern musicians avoid using consecutive fifths and octaves.

As music developed in Europe and the Mozart-Mendelssohn treatment influenced all of the civilized world, its echo was felt also in far away Iceland.

Will you come with me to an out-of-the-way church where there has been little, if any, progress for a long, long time? The church building is made of turf, timber and stone. The roof is of turf, the walls of stone and the front gable is made of timber. Here is the entrance door. We enter. An aisle is in the centre of the building and the seats or pews on either side. Two-thirds of the way in is a low partition made of lattice-work. The woodwork has had no paint on it, but everything is scrubbed and washed to the beautiful whiteness of the Norwegian knotty pine. A streak of newly-washed shell sand may be strewn over the floor in the aisle to take up any dust which might have been tracked indoors. On the inside of the partition is the Altar where the Priest officiates, and here is also the Cantor with his helpers.

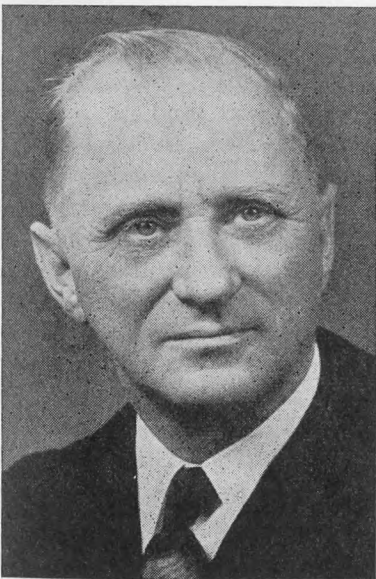
The Priest chants and the Cantor and congregation answer "Amen" or "And with Thy Spirit."

Now the hymns must be sung. The Cantor stands up, clears his throat, and shifts his weight from foot to foot. He looks for and finds the number in the hymn book and, as there is no instrument in the church, he must decide on the pitch by sounding the sonorous and vibrant body tone "N", up and down. It is well calculated to draw attention to him as he now has an important task to perform and wishes to do it well. When he has satisfied himself as to the pitch, he begins abruptly and sings the first line alone. His helpers and the congregation chime in on the second line, but before the first verse is quite finished the Cantor has begun on the second stanza and the congregation takes up on the second line. This goes on until the hymn of many verses is completed in an uninterrupted symphony. One wonders at the beauty of his voice, the strength, the power, the

sureness, the attack, the release, and the brisk enunciation of this untaught farmer. What eerie music! Here is deep solemn reverence by simple folk who surely find genuine solace in their common devotion.

Now, by contrast, let us look in on a devotional in the Cathedral in Reykjavik. The arrangement is somewhat the same here but in contrast everything is modern. The Altar is adorned with a beautiful painting of the Risen Christ, by Sigurður the painter. The Baptismal Fount is a marble block fashioned by the Icelandic-Danish painter, Thorvaldsen, given by him to honor his nationality. The music flows from a modern pipe organ played by a doctor in music who has been giving organ recitals recently in many prominent Churches and Colleges in the United States and Canada. The hymns are rendered by a well modulated chorus.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The foregoing article is adapted from an address delivered by the author to the Women's Music and Art Club of Seattle, Washington.



ICELANDIC GOVERNMENT HONORS EYLANDS

The Grand Cross of the Icelandic Order of the Falcon was awarded **Rev. Dr. V. J. Eylands** of Winnipeg on June 17. He is the pastor of The First Icelandic Lutheran Church in Winnipeg, president of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod of North America and president of the Icelandic National League of North America. Hon. Thor Thors, Icelandic minister to the United States and Canada, made the presentation on behalf of his government in July at a gathering in the Fort Garry Hotel, Winnipeg.

ICELANDIC CELEBRATIONS

As in former years most of the localities where Icelanders and their descendants have settled continued this year to hold their annual celebration of the Icelandic National Holiday.

No doubt the most historic and the most significant of these was the centennial celebration at Spanish Fork, Utah, held on June 15, 16, and 17, to which reference is made elsewhere in this magazine.

The celebration at Gimli was as usual held on Civic Holiday, Monday, August 1st. Ideal weather conditions brought out an estimated attendance of 3500-4000 people of all ages, among them some of the settlers that arrived in the Gimli settlement during the first three years the settlement was in its formative stages. This large gathering enjoyed a well balanced program of music, addresses, and sports.

The days festivities commenced with a colorful parade of floats and decorated cars, led by the "Fjallkona" and an escort of R.C.M.P. throughout the town. First prize in the parade was awarded to Mr. B. V. Arnason, Gimli, for his float depicting in miniature the celebration setting in the park.

The music lovers were given a special treat throughout the morning as Professor Björgvin Guðmundsson, formerly of Winnipeg, and later Director of Music in the schools at Akureyri, Iceland, played some of his finest recordings of choral music produced under his direction. An excellent male quartette consisting of Messrs. Alvin Blöndal, Hermann Fjeldsted, Albert Hall-dorson, and Professor Sigurdur Helga-

son, under the direction of Mrs. Eric Isfeld, entertained during the afternoon program. The ever popular community singing during the early evening, under the direction of Mr. Alvin Blöndal and Mrs. Lincoln Johnson, climaxed the musical program.

The main afternoon program was under the very capable chairmanship of Mr. Snorri Jonasson, Winnipeg. Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson of New York, representing the "Fjallkona", the "Maid of the Mountains", gave an address clear in delivery and inspiring in content. Her maids of honour were Miss Heather Sigurdson and Joanne Laxdal of Winnipeg.

Mayor B. Egilson, Gimli, and Hon. R. D. Turner, Provincial Treasurer, of the Manitoba Government, brought greetings to the gathering.

The main speakers of the day were Rev. Bragi Friðriksson, Lundar and Mr. A. F. Kristjansson, L.L.B., Winnipeg. Rev. Friðriksson, in his excellent Toast to Iceland, reminded the audience of their cultural heritage and the ties that bind us to the land of our forefathers. In a scholarly address, Mr. Kristjansson brought to light some little known facts regarding the early development of the first Icelandic settlements in America and pointed to the influence these people had on the development of the country. Two selections of Icelandic poetry, one by Einar Kvaran, the other by Einar P. Jónsson, were read by Professor Finnþogi Guðmundsson.

The sports' program of junior and senior events, including the competition for the Hanson Trophy represent-

ing the individual championship in the senior sports, which was won by Mr. Lloyd Clegg, of Oak Point, was one of the most successful sports events presented at an Icelandic celebration in recent years. A large audience enjoyed an exhibition of Icelandic "glíma" performed by three boys under the direction of Mr. Arthur Reykdal. A showing of some very fine colored films from Iceland by Mr. Kjartan O. Bjarnason, of Denmark, received a fine ovation from the large gathering.

The Chapter "Frón" of The Icelandic National League, as in former years, celebrated June 17, with an annual program, held in the Federated Church in Winnipeg, under the chairmanship of its president Jón Jónsson. This fine variety program featured piano solos by Thora (Asgeirson) Du Bois and vocal solos by Miss Lilja Eylands and Erlingur Eggertson. Mrs. E. P. Jónsson was the main speaker. Other program items included a reading by Miss Margret Guðmundsson, and tape recordings of an Icelandic childrens' choir.

The populous Icelandic districts of Blaine, Vancouver and adjoining districts, held their annual "Íslendingadagur" at the Peace Arch Park at Blaine, Wash. under the chairmanship of Rev. Albert E. Kristjánsson. The main address was given by Mrs. Holmfridur Danielson, Winnipeg. A musical

program including choir music, vocal quartettes, vocal solos, and instrumental solos, gave variety to a most enjoyable and well balanced program.

The Icelandic settlements of Northern California, in spite of their comparatively small numbers, celebrated the Icelandic National Holiday on June 24, at San Mateo, just south of San Francisco. The chairman, Dr. Andres Fjeldsted Oddstad, introduced the guests of honor, The Hon. Thor Thors, Minister to the U.S.A. and Canada, and Iceland's representative to the U.N., and his son Thor. The Hon. Thors spoke briefly to the gathering and later presented Dr. Oddstad with The Order of the Falcon. Other speakers during the evening's entertainment were Mr. Lyman Lorensen, who spoke on behalf of the Americans present, and Mr. Sveinn Olafsson, who spoke on behalf of the Icelanders. Other items on the program featured vocal solos by Mrs. Leona Oddstad Gordon, and a reading by Mrs. Gunnhildur Lorensen of Davíð Stefánsson's (frá Fagraskógi) poem "Ávarp Fjallkonunnar", composed at the commemoration of the 10th anniversary of Iceland's Independence.

At the time of writing few details are available of the celebration held at Silver Lake, near Seattle on August 7, beyond the fact that it was a successful day with Mrs. Ray Olason representing the Fjallkona. —J. K. L.

Centennial Celebration Thrills Spectators at Spanish Fork

If anyone is looking for guidance as to how to go about conducting an anniversary celebration, they might well look to the Icelandic community at Spanish Fork, Utah. One hundred years have passed since a group of

Icelanders, converted to the Mormon faith, emigrated to America and formed the first permanent Icelandic settlement on this side of the Atlantic. During the three days from June 15th to 17th, 1955, their descendants celebrated

the fact, and they did so in a manner that will stand out for a long time in the memories of all who were fortunate enough to attend.

The series of programs began on the evening of June 15th, with a religious service. While the religious aspects of the celebration might have seemed a trifle extreme to an outsider, everyone must respect the Mormon people for the sincere way in which they practise their religious principles in their daily living. At the conclusion of the service, as at all the sessions of the program, guests were entertained by the singing of Tani Bjornson, of Seattle; Professor Blaine Johnson, of Cedar City; Ellen Jameson and Rose Funk, both of Los Angeles; and were given an opportunity to observe the spinning technique of Dora Thorsteinson, of Oak Point, Man.

Thursday afternoon, June 16th, a gymnastic program was held in the school auditorium. Here three boys, Winston Hand, Herbie Frederickson, and Paul Allan, gave an exhibition of Icelandic wrestling before an enthusiastic audience, most of whom have had little opportunity to witness this particular aspect of their national heritage. Petur Eggertz, delegate to Washington from the Icelandic government, expressed the opinion that the boys wrestled well, but that the style of their performance was marred by the fact that they were not clad in Icelandic "glímuföt." This feeling was expressed by many, but the boys are young and still growing, and their sponsor felt that a special costume for this one occasion would only add unnecessary expenses to an already overburdened budget. This trip gave greatly appreciated impetus to the effort to revive the glíma. It was made possible through contributions

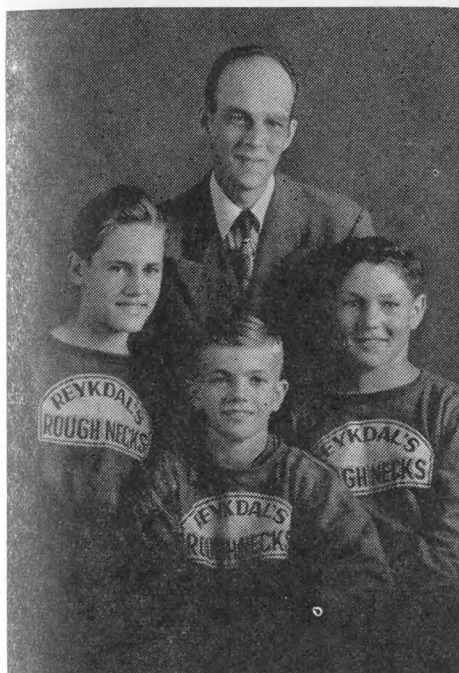
from the Icelandic National League, the Icelandic Canadian Club, and several individuals.

Following the glíma was a demonstration of Kempo jui-jitsu by four men from Los Angeles. This contest is intended for hand-to-hand jungle combat and the blows dealt in it, meant to kill, would have been lethal in the exhibition had the performers not pulled their punches—which they did at precisely the right moment to make the contest look realistic. A colorful display of Indian dancing by students from Brigham Young University concluded the afternoon program.

Thursday evening brought a pageant, written and directed by Mrs. Holmfridur Danielson, of Winnipeg. This event was attended by 2000 people, received high praise from the Utah press and was televised in Salt Lake City. The pageant opened with the Mormon converts bidding the Fjallkona farewell on their departure from Iceland. The next scene showed them trekking across the American plains; pushing their hand carts stumbling and falling on the way, and leaving some of their dead in prairie graves. Then came the arrival in Utah, the welcome from Brigham Young, and the building of log cabins. Country dances that marked their only respite from toil were shown along with the religious observances. Finally came the modern day prosperity and the ultimate realization of pioneer dreams culminating in the erection of the Icelandic monument at Spanish Fork, a replica of which appeared on the stage.

Friday morning brought the main event of the program, a parade down the main street of the town. Floats were made by individual families in honor of their forebears and gave a

good representation of life in Iceland and in Utah. There was a Viking ship with Ingólfur Arnarson at the helm; Snorri Sturluson composing the epic Edda; a meeting at Thingvellir in 930; Leif Eiriksson landing in America;



At top: Art Reykdal; left to right, Herbie Frederickson, Winston Hand, Paul Allan

the baðstofa of an old Icelandic home, with the father reading aloud while the family gathered around him, engaged in various forms of handwork: Jon Sigurdson in his usual parliamentary stance. There were various floats depicting the changes from pioneer days to modern times, and the parade ended with a float bearing a facsimile of the Icelandic monument at Spanish Fork. At noon there was a banquet, the only event during the entire celebration to which admission was

charged, for the committee felt that they were there to honor their forefathers and any concessions to commercialism would cheapen their tribute. During the afternoon, a second glíma exhibition was given, after which the director called on boys out of the audience who wished to try their hand at the ancient sport. The call was answered by several pairs, but the ones who stole the show were two four-year-olds who wrestled with a vigour and abandon that more than made up for their lack of stature.

The formal gathering took place the final evening. Speaker was Petur Eggertz, representing the government of Iceland, introduced by Finnbogi Guðmundsson, who also brought greetings from the Icelandic National League. Marselsis C. Parsons, of the U. S. State Dept., addressed the assembly. The evening closed with the presentation by Petur Eggertz of the Order of the Falcon to John Y. Bearnson, president of the Icelandic Association of Utah, and Mrs. Kate Carter, his sister, president of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers.

The Icelanders in Utah have remembered their past. They are well-read on Icelandic history and have sought to preserve those parts of their heritage which they feel are applicable to their modern environment. In the hundred years since their departure from Iceland, they have largely forgotten the language, but they have retained something even more valuable than that: the characteristics of integrity, hospitality and friendliness that made every visitor to their centennial celebration feel that he was at home among his own people.

BOOK REVIEWS

GOLDEN JUBILEE PUBLICATIONS

A number of books have been published under the auspices of the Publications' Committees of the Saskatchewan and Alberta Golden Jubilees. Two anthologies have already appeared. One is a large volume of 470 pages entitled "Alberta Golden Jubilee Anthology", edited by Dr. W. G. Hardy, Head, Dept. of Classics, University of Alberta; the other is much less ambitious, a pocket-size book of 224 pages entitled "Saskatchewan Harvest", edited by Dr. Carlyle A. King,

Head, Dept. of English, University of Saskatchewan.

Two of the authors in these anthologies are of Icelandic descent, one from each province, and both express their thoughts in poetry.

The Saskatchewan author is Mrs. G. G. Wellington, nee Esther Gudjonson, now of Toronto, formerly of Wynyard, daughter of the pioneer settlers of the Wynyard district, Alfred O. and Pearl Gudjonson. The selection, "Nostalgia", had previously appeared in the Canadian Poetry Magazine, 1949.

NOSTALGIA

Give me the eastern window
for today September snow is melting
on the leaves
(leaves like green bottle-glass in
muddy Spring)
The air is clean and ringing and the
day
hangs like a clapper in a silent bell
Today
drying my hair I lean out, over the
lower roof
(spotted with droppings, vine-
bedraggled, grey,
stained with old rains, shingles
plucked loose by winds)
and glitter with the chorus of the
birds.

I know nothing now of things I cried
for yesterday
or other pain that scooped me
hollow.

Now I am breathing air and looking
east
and snow between the furrows lies
like tinsel.
The sun shines on strawstacks, yellow
shafts blinding.
Spring sleepiness comes down
on the children—with wet feet, red
cheeks
in the strawstacks—

And today
I am ashamed of being so much
grown
for dreams come back that have
forgotten me
who have forgotten that the fall
is spring
from eastern windows on the edge
of day.

The Alberta young poet is Denise Sigríður Helgason, pioneers of the Argyle district in Manitoba. The following is the selection.

Fred Helgason of Edmonton. Fred Helgason is a son of the late Jonas and

MUSIC FESTIVAL

I go to the piano and play
and the notes are like little wooden puppets,
stilted hollow mocking.

"As hard as nails" they seem to say,
"You will be as hard as nails, you
you
you."

Then
it is not the music that is bound,
it is you, and the music
is free.
Suddenly everything is all right as if a swirling fog
had lifted
for now comprehension stands shining in the sun.
Under my fingers flow the notes singing surging,
softening whispering
this pure beautiful music of Bach so like Greek columns
standing tall and white in the wind
this music of tranquillity, quiet controlled grief
bittersweet pain
aching happiness,
love or lose
live or die.

This is music.

Who am I?
I am the girl next door,
the girl you see a thousand times
the girl under the ballerina mask of
youth.

Another Golden Jubilee publication is off the press and in the bookbinder's hands. It is by the chairman of our board, Judge W. J. Lindal, and is entitled: **The Saskatchewan Icelanders, a Strand of the Canadian Fabric**. It was printed by The Columbia Press Ltd., consists of 365 pages and is well illustrated. The main divisions of the book are as follows:

Foreward, by Prof. Geo. W. Simpson,
Head, Dept. of History,
Univ. of Sask. and Chair-
man of the Publications
Committee, Sask. Golden
Jubilee.

Author's Introduction.

The First Settlement Period, 1885-
1900.

The Second Settlement Period,
1900-1912.

The Second Generation.

The World War I.

The Period of Uncertainty and Con-
fusion.

World War II.

The Pattern of Permanent Integra-
tion.

Achievement Record.

The Canadian Fabric of Nationhood
and The Icelandic Strand in that
Fabric.

The book, bound and in an inter-
pretive jacket, will retail at \$4.00

A review of this book will appear in the next issue, but it may not be out of place to point out at this time that its writing is a rare achievement.

The author is an extremely busy judge, who is also chairman of two important national committees, his duties entailing much travelling and correspondence.

Locally, the demands on his time are endless. He was the founder and

is president of the Canada Press Club and was president of the Icelandic Canadian Club for the past three years. He has served continuously on the Editorial Board of the Icelandic Canadian Magazine and is now Chairman of the Board. The founding of the Leif Eiriksson Club is primarily due to his efforts. He was one of the most active members of the Foundation Committee of the Chair of Icelandic Language and Literature at the University of Manitoba and still has the welfare of the Department at heart.

Anyone familiar with the writings of Judge Lindal knows how extensive his preparatory reading and study of the subject matter is, and how painstaking he is in verifying all facts and figures, all of which is so essential in writing a book such as the one he has now completed.

One cannot but wonder how Judge Lindal, exceedingly busy as he is, found time in one short year to write a book of this length and historic importance. —I. J.

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ODES AND ECHOES

Paul Bjarnason,

Vancouver, 1954, pp. 186.

Many readers of this magazine are acquainted with Mr. Bjarnason's writings in the Icelandic tongue and our June, 1954, issue carried a review of his book **Fleygar**, which contained the bulk of his poetic output in that language as well as a number of translations from various English authors. Odes and Echoes on the other hand contains only a few original poems in English, the rest being translations from a great many Icelandic authors.

A comparison of these two books of verse reveals that Bjarnason is a better poet in Icelandic than in Eng-

lish, and both show that he is greater as a translator than as an original poet. Only one of the few original poems in *Odes and Echoes* strikes this writer as being worthy of unstinted praise. This is the short piece **Moods**, a sensitive and finely wrought lyric worthy of inclusion in any anthology of Canadian verse. The best that can be said for the remainder is that they all bear the mark of the skilled workman.

Of the 154 pages of translations, forty-two contain the work of Einar Benediktsson and astoundingly enough these very difficult poems are the most successfully rendered. This is high tribute to the author and he may be well pleased at having been able to give us very acceptable versions of such fine poems as **The Northern Lights**, **A Fog at Sea**, and **The Swan** to name but a few. On the other hand the vernacular poetry of "K.N." loses much of its peculiar flavour in translation. Mention should also be made of the excellent translation of Kristján Jónsson's **The Cataract**. The translation of Stephan G Stephansson's long

poem **Armistice** is as competent and uninspired as the original.

Mr. Bjarnason has long contended that the proper way to translate from Icelandic into English is to observe as far as practicable the rimes, stresses and rules of alliteration that govern Icelandic verse forms. This is still a debatable point but it appears to the writer that our author has furnished the most effective refutation of his own thesis by his translation of Matthías Jochumsson's rousing poem **Íslenzk Tunga** (Our Mother Tongue). Here the author attempts the impossible and failure was inevitable. The English language can not possibly reproduce the clank and clamer which the Icelandic gives to this near-archaic pseudo-skaldic verse form.

It has long been the hope of those who treasure our literary heritage that someone might arise who could give it classic English form. The chosen one has not come but Mr. Bjarnason has done noble work as a pathfinder and who knows but that fate may have cast him here in the role of John the Baptist. —H. Th.

New Films of Icelanders in the West

Kjartan O. Bjarnason of Copenhagen, Denmark, came to this continent in June of this year for the purpose of showing a film of Iceland and also to work on a film depicting the life and activities of people of Icelandic descent in Canada and the United States.

Accompanied by Professor Finnbogi Guðmundsson of the Department of Icelandic Language and Literature at the University of Manitoba, Mr.

Bjarnason has visited almost every Icelandic settlement on the continent.

Noting the excellence of his film on Iceland, many people are looking forward to seeing his films taken on this side of the Atlantic of familiar scenes and personages.

Prof. Guðmundsson, who is a member of the Executive Committee of the Icelandic National League, initiated this film project and made all arrangements to carry it through.

WE HAVE A STORY TO TELL

by Rev. SVEINBJÖRN OLAFSSON



Rev. Sveinbjörn Olafsson

"And the king of Israel said unto his servants. Know ye that Ramoth in Gilead is ours, and we are still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria?" I Kings 22:3.

This incident came to my mind in connection with us Icelanders. We are prone to claim that our inheritance is great, nevertheless we do not share it with the rest of the world. We have a story to tell, but we are "still". We are content to let others tell it, others

who are less qualified to tell it. Ramoth in Gilead is ours and we take it not out of their hands.

In reply to an inquiry several years ago, I received a letter from an American publisher which said in part: "A biography of Leifur Eiriksson probably would be a good seller. His biography has not been written." A few months ago I came upon a book written for children by Ruth Cromer Weir, entitled, "Leif Erickson, Explorer" published by Abingdon-Cokesbury. It is a book well worth reading, well illustrated but the author takes poetic license with minor facts and imagination is employed to make it more readable for children.

Here is a hero known the world over, who we claim was Icelandic, born and brought up in Iceland, but, to my knowledge, no Iclander has written a story of his life for the multitudes to read. Who is more qualified to write his thrilling story than we who speak the language he spoke? Who is more qualified than we or our parents who were born in the land of his birth? We read the Sagas in the original language, and they are almost the sole source of knowledge about this man of the sea. We become irate when an attempt is made to discredit his discovery or when another nation claims him as its native son. Have we done our share to keep the records straight? "Ramoth in Gilead is ours and we are still".

Every little while someone writes about Leif's discovery of North America. One naturally wonders if the

subject is not becoming stale and if the interest in it is not fading. Such does not seem to be the case. As recently as December of 1954 an article appeared in *The Reader's Digest*, the most widely read monthly in the United States, under the title, "They Found the New World", by Donald Culross Peatie. Judging from his name, the author is not Icelandic nor too well acquainted with the Sagas. We are annoyed when we discover errors in such widely read articles as this one. Nevertheless, though "Ramothe in Gilead is ours and we are still." Why this conspiracy of silence?

In addition to a biography of Leifur Eiriksson, not too long, and articles on his discovery of North America, may I suggest a few other fields in which I think Icelanders should be writing to-day. H. G. Wells in his "Outline of History", states that Columbus visited Iceland before he sailed west in 1492, and that in Iceland he learned much about Vinland the Good, including how many days sailing were required to reach it. If this contention could be substantiated it would add untold glory to Leifur, the Icelandic. It seems almost incredible that the sailings of Leif, Karlsefni, and others did not come to the listening ears of Christopher Columbus, especially in light of the fact that the Greenland settlement flourished and disappeared before his discovery of the West. Thorfinn Karlsefni's attempt to settle North America is a fascinating subject and, to all historically minded persons, important in the early history of America. An interesting and authentic account of Greenland's discovery and settlement by Icelanders would be of interest. Such an account now would be most opportune as American bases on Greenland have created renewed

interest in that country.

A good book on Iceland for children and high school young people is sorely needed. I think such a book should contain:

(a) A short history—discovery, type of people, establishment of Parliament, introduction of Christianity, rule by Norway, rule by Denmark, complete independence.

(b) Facts about the country—geological formation, mountains, valleys, glaciers, hot springs, geysers, etc.

(c) General information—temperature, occupations, summer and winter sports, etc. This book should be well illustrated and who is better qualified to do this than Mr. Charles Thorson who has a thorough knowledge of the characteristics of Icelanders, is original, and also is an artist in his field. I am convinced that the time is opportune for writing about these and related subjects.

Let me mention one more unfinished task before us. There hardly is an Icelandic who does not love Hallgrímur Pétursson—if he knows anything about him—and thinks he has something to give to every nation. Then why do we not make him known, and share him and his work with the rest of the world? There is today a demand for devotional books.

From time to time I have loaned and given away copies of Charles Venn Pilcher's little volume, "Icelandic Meditations on the Passion" which is Hallgrímur's Passion Hymns greatly abbreviated and translated into English. Here are excerpts from two letters I have received.

"I have read with keen interest 'Icelandic Meditation on the Passion' by Hallgrímur Pétursson translated by Bishop C. V. Pilcher. These remarkable hymns belong to the early period

of Lutheran Hymnody. They are simple, sincere, richly fervid and worthy of a permanent place among Christian classics. Pastor Pétursson was a remarkable genius and his work deserves to be much better known in the English-speaking world than at present" (Dr. T. A. Stafford, Executive Secretary of the Board of Pensions of the Methodist Church).

"I find that 'Meditation of the Passion' by Hallgrímur Pétursson are written in a characteristic and forthright simplicity of the old Lutheran hymnody. A Lutheran feels very much at home with them, because we could immediately begin to use these hymns and meditations in our Passiontide services. I am recommending to the Committee on Hymnology and Litur-

gies of my denomination that selections from these hymns and meditations be incorporated in our Hymnal". (Dr. Adalbert Kretzmann, one of the leaders of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod).

The field is ripe unto the harvest. Every denomination has a religious periodical (most of them weeklies) with the number of subscribers varying from a few thousand to over three hundred thousand. Many of these would be happy to print such material as Hallgrímur Pétursson's "Meditations on the Passion" translated by Bishop C. V. Pilcher. Who can better do these things than we? Is it not reasonable that we should take on this responsibility? Besides herein lies fame, fortune and service.

Stefan Hansen Appointed to Manitoba Board



Mr. Stefan Hansen

Stefan Hansen of Winnipeg was appointed by the Manitoba govern-

ment in May of this year to the province's new Hospital Rate Board the function of which is to set rates which the province and municipalities together will pay for hospital care of indigent people. The board also has the responsibility of seeing that other revenues of hospitals are sufficient to meet their current expenditures.

Mr. Hansen, who is director of group insurance for the Great West Life Assurance Company in Winnipeg, was born at Olafsvik in Snæfellsýsla in Iceland and came to Canada with his family at the age of four.

He received his education in Saskatchewan schools and at the University of Manitoba from which he graduated in Arts. He is a fellow of the Society of Actuaries.

IN THE NEWS

CENTENARIAN HONORED



Vigdís Bjarnadóttir Samson

Mrs. Vigdís Bjarnadóttir Samson, who resides with her daughter, Miss Anna Johnson, Ste 3, Theodora Apts., Winnipeg, celebrated her hundredth birthday on August 17th. Born in Snæfellsýsla, Iceland, she came to Canada in 1888 with her husband Björn Jónsson, who died a few years later.

Her second husband was Samson F. Samson, also deceased. They lived for many years in Elfros, Sask. She has a son Sveinn, now resident of the United States and an adopted daughter, Mrs. Emily Atkinson of Dawson Creek, B. C., who was with her mother on this happy occasion.

Mrs. Samson received congratulatory messages from Queen Elizabeth II, Prime Minister St. Laurent and Premier Douglas Campbell as well as flowers and greetings from numerous friends. A much appreciated message was this one:

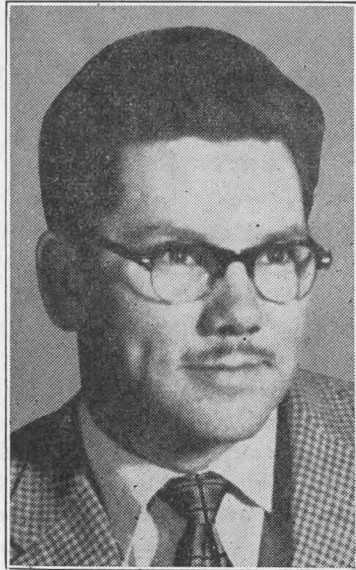
"The pioneers of Elfros, Sask., celebrating Saskatchewan's Golden Jubilee, send their warmest greetings to you, their oldest living pioneer. Accept our very sincere congratulations on your birthday which will mark for you a century of worthy living. May God's love continue to enfold you, is the wish of all your old friends here."

Her hobby for some years has been that of knitting mittens which have been much admired for their fine quality. Most of these she has given to needy children.

She is very fond of poetry and the many beautiful poems she knows by heart have lightened the burden of her years.

★

PAUL WESTDAL ENTOMOLOGIST



Paul Harold Westdal

Paul Harold Westdal, entomologist for the Canadian Department of Agriculture at Brandon, Man., was elected president of the Western Manitoba

branch of the Agricultural Institute of Canada for 1955-56.

Mr. Westdal graduated from the University of Manitoba in 1947 with a Bachelor of Science degree. In 1948 he returned to the university to take post graduate studies in entomology and graduated with the degree of Master of Science in 1950.

In addition to his membership in the Agricultural Institute of Canada, Mr. Westdal is a member and former executive of the Entomological Society of Manitoba and member of the Entomological Society of Canada. He is also member of the Man., Institute of Agrolology and of the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada.

Mr. Westdal, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul J. Westdal of Winnipeg, has been in the employ of the Canadian Department of Agriculture since 1946.

★

THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE CANADIAN WEEKLIES

John A. Vopni, publisher of The Davidson Leader, Davidson, Sask., was elected president of the Canadian Weekly Newspapers' Association on September 14, during their annual convention in Vancouver, B. C.

Born in Winnipeg in 1898, the eldest of six brothers, the sons of the well-known Icelandic pioneers Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Vopni, he apprenticed to the printing trade with the Icelandic weekly, Lögberg. When he was 23 he started his own printing business in Winnipeg, which he carried on till 1931 when he bought The Davidson Leader.

In addition to serving as CWNA's top officer, Mr. Vopni is secretary-manager of the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspaper Association. His outstand-



John A. Vopni

ing efforts on behalf of the Sask. weeklies have won him widespread recognition. At the group's convention in August it was revealed that his persistent efforts had resulted in well over \$50,000 worth of special advertising in Golden Jubilee editions of Saskatchewan weeklies.

Mr. Vopni has been very active in community work. Following many years' service as a town councillor he was Davidson's mayor for 16 years. Similarly he was local Board of Trade secretary for several terms and then president. A past chairman of the Davidson Hospital Board, he is now secretary-manager of the institution and is very busy planning a new hospital building. He is a director of the provincial committee in charge of the Golden Jubilee celebration of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Vopni is married; his wife Laura is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Halldor Bjarnason. Mr. and Mrs. Vopni have a son, John.

Tribute to Einar Páll



Einar Páll Jónsson

Someone has written that to meet people of distinction is an honor, those of rich personality a pleasure. For those who know Einar Páll the two apply.

Little would the neighbor folk of Háreksstaðir in Jökuldal on that morning of August 11, 1880, have thought that the child born that day would in the next three-quarters of a century develop an abiding affection for his mother tongue, a keen appreciation of the literature of his native land and then sail to the New World, there to carve out a name for himself and, in the craving, bring honor to his race, land and place of origin.

The neighbor folk at Háreks' Place in Jökul valley today will know that this son of their community, given the name of Einar Páll seventy-five years

ago, chose the world of letters and used the power of the spoken and written word to enrich his lands of origin and adoption, his race and its language and literature.

An early yearning for learning led Mr. Jónsson to the State College of Iceland where he spent four years. Coming to America in 1913 he chose Winnipeg in Manitoba to begin his venture in the New World. He joined the editorial staff of the Icelandic weekly *Lögberg* in 1915 and was appointed assistant editor in 1917. In 1927 he became editor and has since that time almost continuously held that post.

Mr. Jónsson has composed and published two books of poems. The first is entitled "*Öræfaljóð*", published in Winnipeg in 1915, the second "*Sólheimar*" published in Reykjavík, Iceland, in 1945. Mr. Jónsson is also author of the travelogue "*Í andlegri nálægð við Ísland*", published at Akureyri, Iceland, in 1944.

In 1938 Mr. Jónsson married Miss Ingibjörg Sigurgeirson, Manitoba-born, and a school teacher by profession. Mr. and Mrs. Jónsson travelled to Iceland in 1946, as guests of honor of the Icelandic Government.

Thus runs the story of this Icelandic writer and editor who on his seventy-fifth anniversary this year was accorded the thanks and good wishes of friends and admirers on both sides of the Atlantic.

Suffice it to say that, when the story of the Canadian Icelanders is completed, one may be led to conclude that the story and work of Einar Páll Jónsson will find an honored place in Icelandic archives. —T.O.S.T.

MRS. ISFELD NAMED MUSIC TEACHERS' NATIONAL PRESIDENT



Mrs. Eric Isfeld of Winnipeg was elected president of the Canadian Federation of Music Teachers' Associations at the tenth annual convention held in Vancouver, July 2-6 this year.

The federation includes provincial associations in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

Mrs. Isfeld received her education in schools at Winnipeg Beach and Husavik, Man., and studied music at Winnipeg Beach, Selkirk and Winnipeg, specializing in piano and obtaining her A.R.C.T. degree with honors in Winnipeg.

She was a pupil of the late Jónas Pálsson of Winnipeg and his assistant for a period of five years.

Mrs. Isfeld is a member of the Music Advisory Board of the University of Manitoba. She is a member also and vice-president for the past two years of the Winnipeg Civic Music

League which initially sponsored the organization of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and establishment of the Rainbow Stage, the latter in conjunction with the Winnipeg Parks Board.

Mrs. Isfeld is a past president of the Manitoba Registered Music Teachers Association as well as past president of the Winnipeg branch of the provincial organization.

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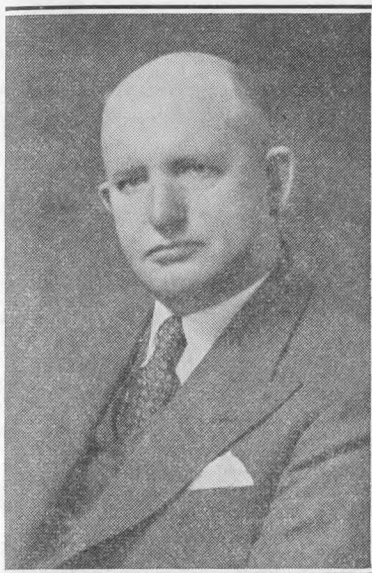
REGIONAL DIRECTOR



Hannes J. Petursson who for some time was the Regional Engineer in Winnipeg for the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation has been transferred to Edmonton and is now Regional Engineer for the province of Alberta, the Yukon and the western part of the N. W. Territories.

A short time ago the activities of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation were widened to include the northern areas and in the necessary re-organization, Mr. Petursson was given a much wider field than before with added responsibilities.

RE-ELECTED TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Arni G. Eggertson, Q.C.

At the annual meeting of the Icelandic Steamship Company Limited held in Reykjavík June 14 this year, Mr. Arni G. Eggertson, Q.C. of Winnipeg was re-elected to the board of directors for a term of two years.

Mr. Eggertson has for many years served as an official representative of the company in Canada and has looked after the interests of its shareholders on this continent.

In recognition of this work and for his services as a member of the Foundation Committee of the chair of Icelandic language and literature at the University of Manitoba, the government of Iceland has conferred on Mr. Eggertson the Grand Knight Cross of the Icelandic Order of the Falcon.

The presentation was made last year in Washington, D.C., by Hon. Thor Thors, Iceland's ambassador to the United States and Canada.

ARNASON TO TAKE ADVANCED STUDIES IN PARIS

Professor Hjorvardur Arnason, head of the University of Minnesota School of Fine Arts, Minneapolis, was this year awarded a United States Government Fulbright scholarship for advanced studies and during the coming year will study in Paris, France.

Professor Arnason was born in Winnipeg in April 1908, son of Mrs. Maria Arnason and the late Sveinbjörn Arnason. He received his ele-



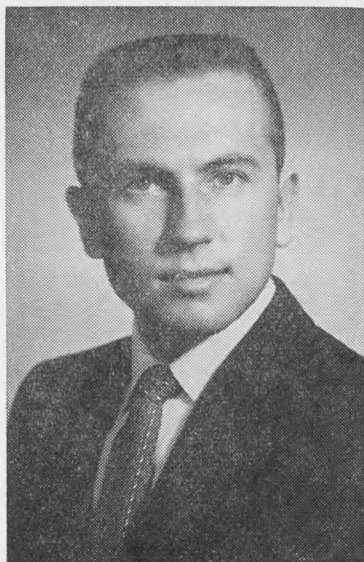
Prof. Hjorvardur Arnason

mentary and high school education in Winnipeg and holds degrees from North Western University, Evanston, Illinois and Princeton University, New Jersey. He has left for overseas with Mrs. Arnason and children Eleanor and Jon. They will make their home in Paris during the coming fall.

Professor Arnason heads the Walker Art Gallery in Minneapolis and is well-known in art circles on both sides of the Atlantic. He intimated prior to his departure that he might visit Iceland next spring. In World War II he was a United States government representative in Iceland during the years 1943 and 1944.

UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

WINS HIGH HONORS AT STANFORD U



Daniel John Simundson

High scholastic honors came to **Daniel John Simundson** of Seattle, Wash., when he received his Bachelor of Arts degree upon graduation last spring from Stanford, University, California. He graduated with "Great Distinction" and was made a fellow of the Phi Beta Kappa Scholastic Honors Society.

Rated a profound student Mr. Simundson, on graduating from high school was awarded scholarships for four years in succession totalling \$1,000 per year. With these and holiday earnings he is said to have financed his university education in its entirety.

Always active in student affairs at the university, in athletics and music particularly, Mr. Simundson was, among other things, the university's

track manager, and also member of the university choir which last year appeared at the War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco, with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra in presentation of Handel's "The Messiah."

Son of Rev. and Mrs. Kolbeinn Simundson of Seattle, Mr. Simundson will begin theological studies this fall at the Lutheran College at Maywood, Illinois.

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MISS DOROTHY JOAN JOHNSON



Miss Dorothy Joan Johnson

Miss Dorothy Joan Johnson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. E. Johnson of Winnipeg, graduated last spring from the University of Manitoba with a degree of Bachelor of Science in Home Economics. Miss Johnson was Lady Stick in her faculty during her final year at the university.

AWARDED DEGREES IN AGRICULTURE AND PEDAGOGY



Olafur Allan Olson

Olafur Allan Olson of Winnipeg has been awarded two bachelorates, those of agriculture and pedagogy, at the University of Manitoba.

Mr. Olson, twenty-five years of age, graduated in 1953 with the degree of Bachelor of Science in Agriculture. After spending one year on the teaching staff of the school at Lynn Lake in Northern Manitoba, he returned to the university to study pedagogy and this spring was awarded his Bachelor of Pedagogy degree.

Mr. Olson is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Olafur Olson, Kirkfield Park, Winnipeg.

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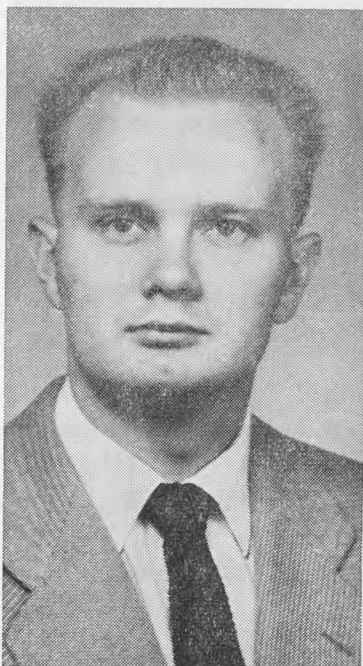
Graduates in Nursing

Miss Helga Thordarson graduated from the Vancouver General Hospital Nursing School last year and immediately joined the nursing staff of that

hospital. She had previously taken a business course in Winnipeg. She was granted leave of absence for the summer months and has been touring Europe, meeting her sister Laura (Ice. Can. Autumn, 1954) in Athens, Greece. They are daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Theodor Thordarson of Vancouver.

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JON VALDIMAR EYLANDS GRADUATES IN ARTS



Jon Valdimar Eylands

Jon Valdimar Eylands, son of Rev. Dr. V. J. and Mrs. Eylands of Winnipeg, was awarded his Bachelor of Arts degree in June of this year after completing his studies at the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, N. D.

Mr. Eylands, who emphasized Icelandic in his language studies, has decided to study medicine and will enter the faculty of medicine this fall at North Dakota University.

RICHARD BECK JR. WINS DEGREE AND COMMISSION



Richard Beck, B. Sc.

Richard Beck Jr., Grand Forks, N. Dak. was awarded his Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering in June of this year after completing studies at the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks. At the same time he won his commission as second lieutenant in the United States Air Force reserve.

He was among 38 students from the university so commissioned after completing training with the Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps and at the same time was one of thirteen university students in the R.O.T.C. who won their commission with honors.

Mr. Beck, now 22, is the son of Dr. Richard and Mrs. Beck of Grand Forks.

BRANDON PROFESSOR GIVEN M.A. DEGREE

Professor Barney Thordarson of Brandon, professor of English at Brandon College since 1945, was this year awarded a Master of Arts degree by the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. Professor Thordarson majored in English, with American studies as his minor field.

Born in 1904 at Langruth, Man., son of Mr. and Mrs. John Thordarson, he attended public and high schools there and continued his studies at Wesley College (now United College), Winnipeg, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1931.

Professor Thordarson is past president of the Western Manitoba Teachers' Association and of Brandon Curling Club, and Past Master of Tweed Masonic Lodge in Brandon. He is an elder of Knox United Church, Brandon.

Married, his wife is the former Miss Kathleen McNaught. They have two children, Joyce Marie, who is a graduate of Brandon College in Arts and of the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, with the degree of Bachelor of Social Science. Son David John has completed third year arts at Brandon College.

Over the years Professor Thordarson has taught school at Elgin, Carberry and Virden, Man.

In 1767, after the Alaskan purchase, Secretary of State William H. Seward urged that the United States also acquire Iceland. The Icelanders retorted aptly and not without humor that since Iceland had discovered North America, the shoe should be on the other foot.

NEWS SUMMARY

Mr. and Mrs. Björgvin Guðmundsson of Akureyri, Iceland came to Canada in June. Mr. Guðmundsson, who is a noted composer and teacher of music, and director of the famed Cantata Choir of Akureyri, has travelled to many of the Icelandic settlements to give the people an opportunity to hear the modern music of Iceland by the means of tape recordings. Mr. and Mrs. Guðmundsson expect to leave for home in October.

★

Pioneer Memorial Erected at Lundar

On Sunday, July 17, an Icelandic pioneer memorial was unveiled at Lundar, Man. The program began in Lundar Lutheran Church with divine service at 11 a.m. when Rev. V. J. Eylands, D.D. of Winnipeg addressed the gathering and the sermon was delivered by Rev. Bragi Friðriksson.

Following the service the people gathered at the monument on the recreation grounds where Mr. J. A. Bjornsson, chairman of the monument committee was master of ceremonies.

Mr. K. Byron, reeve of Coldwell municipality, delivered an address and Mr. Skuli Sigfusson, formerly M.L.A. for St. George constituency for more than 25 years, unveiled the monument which was draped with the flag of Iceland.

This inscription is on the memorial plaque:

Erected in 1955 in commemoration of the Icelandic pioneers in Lundar, Otto, Westfold, Markland and adjoining districts. They established settlement in 1887

Also inscribed is a poem by Mr. Vigfus J. Guttormsson.

Rev. Bragi Friðriksson officiated at the dedication of the memorial which was followed by rendition of the national anthems of Canada and Iceland. Other speakers at the ceremony were Rev. P. M. Petursson, Dr. Eylands, Mr. G. P. Magnusson, Mr. Chris Halldorson, M.L.A., and Mr. D. J. Lindal. The program ended in the community hall where the ladies' aids served lunch for the entire gathering.

Members of the committee in charge of erecting the memorial were J. A. Bjornsson, Magnus Halldorsson, V. J. Guttormsson, D. J. Lindal, K. Byron, G. P. Magnusson and Rev. Bragi Friðriksson.

★

Rev. Olafur Skulason, a newly-ordained minister from Iceland, is now in charge of the Lutheran parish of Mountain in North Dakota.

★

Linguaphone Icelandic Course Now Available.

Many years ago it was reported that a linguaphone Icelandic course was being produced. People interested in Icelandic have awaited this study and teaching aid with much interest. The records are now available, thanks to the patriotic interest and enterprise of Bjorn Bjornsson of the Icelandic Marketing Company, London, England, who persuaded the Linguaphone Institute of London to produce the Icelandic course and who also contributed generously to a very heavy production costs.

The Linguaphone method of teach-

ing languages is by means of specially prepared language records and textbooks. The Icelandic course was prepared by Dr. Stefan Einarsson, professor of Scandinavian philology at Johns Hopkins University in the United States. Five people, specially trained, took part in recording the course.

The course is suitable equally for children and adults, for those who are beginners as well as for those who have a theoretical knowledge of the language and wish to become proficient in the spoken language. It consists of descriptive talks and conversations which have been recorded on fifteen double-sided records. There is also a special sound record. The text is in easy-flowing and perfectly natural idiomatic language which would be used by educated people under similar circumstances. Practical grammar is introduced into the text of each lesson and is absorbed by the student as he goes along.

In order to enable the student to follow easily the words heard on the records, the first lessons are spoken very slowly and distinctly, the rate of speech increasing as the course progresses so that in the more advanced lessons a perfectly natural rate of speech is heard.

This course in Icelandic was ready for general release in July, 1955. Agents in Canada are Messrs. Erlick Linguaphone Institute Co., 901 Bleury St., Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

★

Linda Hallson in U. S. Play

Miss Linda Hallson, Winnipeg actress, recently played opposite the famous Swedish actress, Signe Hasso, in a performance of Edward Mabley's *Gald Tidings* at the Cherry Country

Playhouse, Traverse City, Michigan.

Miss Hallson, a graduate of the University of Manitoba, played the lead here in *Born Yesterday* and *John Love Mary*.

She also designed the sets for some of the Cherry Country Playhouse productions. She has been in Michigan for the summer. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hallson of Winnipeg.

★

At the thirty-first annual convention of the Lutheran Women's League (Icelandic) held at Glenboro, Man., June 3-5, Mrs. B. Bjarnason of Langruth, Man., was re-elected president.

★

A convention of the Western Canada Unitarian Conference (formerly the Icelandic Unitarian Church Conference) was held in Wynyard, June 30-July 3. It was attended by Rev. Richard B. Gibbs of Boston, Mass, who is Director of Church Extension and Maintenance. Rev. Philip M. Petersen, minister of the First Federated Church in Winnipeg, is president of this organization.

★

Dr. Gestur Kristjansson, practising physician in North Dakota for two years, has returned to Winnipeg and opened an office in the Osborne Medical Building. Dr. Kristjansson is a past president of the Leif Eiriksson Club.

★

Rev. Robert Jack, who has served the Arborg-Gimli Lutheran parish for the past two years, has accepted a call from a congregation in Húnavatnssýsla, Iceland. He has just published a book *Arctic Living* which will be reviewed in a later issue.

Disastrous Floods

The high level of Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba during the past two years has caused floods which have damaged thousands of acres of good farmland, particularly around Lake Manitoba and in the Interlake area.

Losses suffered in these areas have been enormous; many farmers have had to dispose of their livestock and abandon their homes.

The Icelandic settlement of Reykjavik, considered one of the best farming districts along the west shore of Lake Manitoba suffered most severely. The residents were gradually flooded out of their fine modern homes, and now only a few remain.

★

Diamond Jubilee

Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Halldorson of 2542 Burlington Ave., South Burnaby, B. C. celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary this spring. Their many friends joined in making the occasion happy and memorable.

★

Mrs. Sigrid McDowell was elected president of the Unitarian Women's Alliance at its twenty-ninth annual convention held in Wynyard, Sask., July 1 and 2nd.

★

The 80th anniversary of the death of Hjálmar Jónsson (Bólu-Hjálmar) was observed July 28 with the unveiling of a monument erected at Bóla, his old homestead in Skagafjörður, Iceland. The well-known poems by this Icelandic 19th century poet are characterized by rugged vigor and originality.

Rev. Harold S. Sigmar, pastor of Gimli-Hecla Lutheran parish for the past four and one-half years, has accepted a call from a Lutheran congregation in Kelso, Washington. He will be succeeded by Rev. Bragi Friðrikson of Lundar, Man.

★

In a by-election held in Ward Two, Winnipeg, on June 8 of this year, Paul Thorkelsson, president of Thorkelsson Limited, wood-wool insulation manufacturers, was elected to the Winnipeg School Board.

★

Rev. Eric H. Sigmar has organized a new Lutheran mission congregation in the Silver Heights district of St. James, Winnipeg. A well attended opening service with pastor Sigmar in charge was held Sunday, August 21, in the St. James Y.M.C.A. building Ferry Road South.

★

Mr. G. S. Thorvaldson Q.C. of Winnipeg, president of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, attended the convention of the Commonwealth Chambers of Commerce held at Stratford-on-Avon, England, in June of this year. He was also a speaker at meetings in other cities in England and Scotland as a representative of Canada. He was accompanied overseas by Mrs. Thorvaldson. They travelled on the continent before returning home late in July.

★

The Amercian Legion Certificate of Distinguished Achievement was this summer awarded to Miss May Kardal, a student at Baker school, Minneapolis.

The citation given with the award stated it is "in recognition of the possession of those high qualities of honor,

courage, scholarship, leadership and service which are necessary to the preservation and protection of the fundamental institutions of our government and advancement of society."

Miss Kardal is the daughter of Mr. Oli Kardal, well known singer, and Mrs. Kardal, formerly of Gimli and residents for the past two years of Minneapolis.



Argyle Celebrates 75th Anniversary

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of settlement in the Argyle area in south central Manitoba, where many Icelanders were among the early pioneers, was celebrated at Glenboro with ceremonies held in conjunction with Dominion Day observances July 1, of this year.

Speakers there noted that some of the Icelanders who settled in Argyle were among the early immigrants from Iceland to this country. One of these, Fridbjorn S. Fredrickson, now 96 years of age, was present at the July celebration at Glenboro. Mr. Fredrickson now resides with his son Fred, a Glenboro merchant.

Main address at the celebration was by Dr. Tryggvi J. Oleson, Winnipeg, native of the Argyle district, now professor of history at the University of Manitoba.



Jónas Jónasson frá Hriflu, member of Althing for 30 years, former Minister of Justice, and a distinguished scholar and author, attained his 70th birthday anniversary May 1, this year.

Mr. Jónsson came to this country on a lecture tour in 1938 visiting almost every Icelandic settlement. He became keenly interested in the efforts of the Icelanders in the West in main-

taining Icelandic culture on this continent.

It was primarily due to his initiative and influence that Althing passed an Act in 1938 donating a copy of every new book published in Iceland to the Icelandic library at the University of Manitoba.



Emile Walters To Paint Historic Sites

The United States State Department has given the eminent Icelandic landscape artist, Emile Walters, an assignment to paint historic sites in both Iceland and Greenland pertaining to the Vinland sagas.

Mr. Walters will use his artistic skill to present visually as far as possible what is so dramatically told in the Icelandic sagas, in describing the first known contacts, by Europeans, with this continent.

Mr. Walters left for Iceland in July to begin his work. Next summer he expects to be in Greenland, painting the ruins of the Icelandic settlement there.



Wins U. N. Essay Contest

An international essay competition is sponsored annually by the United Nations. This being the 10th anniversary year of the organization the subject chosen for the essay was Methods of informing the public in every country on the work of the United Nations.

Mr. Kjartan Ragnars, the only one who sent an essay from Iceland, won an award which was a four-week visit to the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York. After his sojourn there Mr. Ragnars visited friends and relatives in Manitoba.

Icelandic Lutheran Synod Marks 70th Anniversary

The seventieth anniversary of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod of North America was marked by a five-day convention which opened at Gimli, Man., June 25, with approximately 100 delegates in attendance as well as a large number of guests which included Rev. K. K. Olafson, a former president of the Synod, Rev. Dr. George Harkins of New York, representing the United Lutheran Church, and Rev. Skuli Sigurgeirson of Duluth, Minn.

A highlight of the anniversary service was the presentation of an illuminated scroll bearing greetings from the Bishop of the State Church in Iceland, Dr. Ásmundur Guðmundsson.

Mr. Ólafur Skúlason, who had recently arrived from Iceland and was an official delegate of the Icelandic Church, presented the scroll on behalf of the bishop.

One of the most important resolutions passed at the convention was that the synod undertake to raise a fund of \$175,000 for the purpose of improving and enlarging Betel, the old folks' home at Gimli.

Officers elected for the ensuing year were: Dr. V. J. Eylands, president; Rev. G. Guttormsson, vice-president; Rev. E. H. Sigmar, secretary; N. O. Bardal, treasurer; Rev. Stefan Guttormsson, Rev. Bragi Friðriksson, Erlingur Eggertson, Mrs. Bonnie Bjarnason, Percy Morrison and Victor Maxon.

★

New York Iclander Honored by Greece

Sigurður A. Magnússon of New York was this year awarded the Golden Cross of the Royal Order of Phoenix by the King of Greece in recognition of his services to that country.

His book, "Grískir reisudagar", written in Icelandic and published in Reykjavík, Iceland, two years ago, deals with his travels in Greece as well as with the history, culture and industries of the Hellenic kingdom.

Mr. Magnússon, who is commentator on the United Nations Icelandic programs, is also an instructor in Icelandic in the course given by the College of the City of New York and the Scandinavian-American Foundation.

HEALTHY POPULATION GAIN

(An Editorial in the Toronto Telegram)

Canada's population has passed 15,600,000, the Bureau of Statistics finds in an intercensal-year computation. Since June, 1945, the increase has been 3,529,000 or 29.2 per cent. Since the 1951 census, the increase has been 11.4 per cent. The comparable period in the U.S. is from the 1950 census to 1954, in which the increase was only 7.3 per cent.

Ontario had the largest increase in the past year, at 137,000, bringing

population of the province to 5,183,000, but its percentage of gain, at 2.7, was about the same as in most other provinces. It was less than that of Quebec, 3 per cent, and of the Northwest Territories at 6 per cent.

It has been estimated that Canada needs a population of 30,000,000 by 1975 to meet defence responsibilities and to fill a framework of government that is much too large for the country. At even the recent rate—about 3,000,000 since end of World War II—we shall not quite reach that total un-

less immigration is stepped up from last year's 154,227.

Still, natural increase is promising. The bureau's current statistical review reports natural increase for May of the year as 27,638, compared with 25,291 in the corresponding month last year. With immigration, but no deduction for emigration, that would run to about 5,000,000 in the next 10 years, and a similar gain in another decennial period would result in total population of around 26,000,000.

Our postwar gains are attributed by the bureau to "a rising birth rate, falling death rate and heavy immigration". An accelerated trend would bring that larger population Canada requires to achieve her destiny.

★

OGOPOGO RAISES HIS HEAD

Lake Okanagan, British Columbia, has beautiful scenery, beautiful water and, so the story goes, a most unattractive monster—Ogopogo.

More than 25 people got a close view of Ogopogo recently while they were sipping tea in the Squatic Tea Room on the shore of the lake. They said the monster surfaced less than 30 feet from the shore and remained there for several minutes.

"He had three coils and at times we could see right through them", said Mrs. David Millings. "He had a snout and his head was oval shape. The humps were a green silvery color."

★

QUEBEC TO REMAIN QUEBEC

Some city dwellers like quaint and narrow streets, others like speedways.

Mayor Wilfred Hamel of Quebec belongs to the old school. He says he will not let the character of his city be ruined by elevated highways.

Quebec's Municipal Planning Com-

mission had recommended a super-highway to speed traffic. Said the Mayor: "Who wants Quebec to become another New York or Boston?"

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